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Map illustrating the

English Miles
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Aegean Sea
Propontis
Hellespontus

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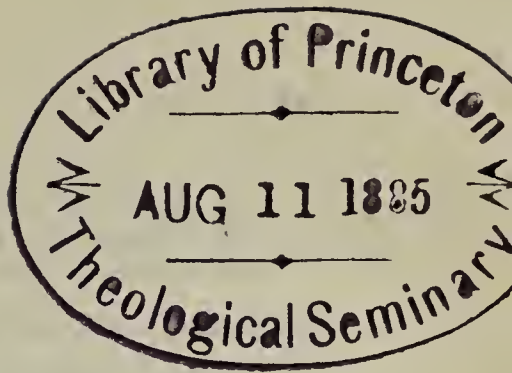
THE
LIFE OF PAUL.

BY THE
REV. J. PATON ✓GLOAG, D.D.,
GALASHIELS.

AUTHOR OF "COMMENTARY ON THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES," ETC., ETC.

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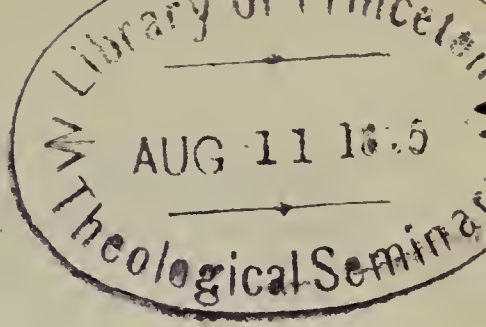
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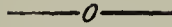
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LIFE OF PAUL.



CHAPTER I.

THE EARLY LIFE OF PAUL.

1. SOURCES OF OUR INFORMATION. Our information on the subject of Paul's life is derived from two sources—the Acts of the Apostles and the thirteen Epistles which were written by him. In the Acts we have the narrative of his conversion, of his three missionary journeys, and of his imprisonment, first at Cæsarea and afterwards at Rome. In the Epistles there are incidental allusions to various circumstances in his life. These two sources not only corroborate each other by their undesigned coincidences, but also complete each other. Were it not for the Acts we should know little of the public life of the apostle, and were it not for the Epistles we should be equally ignorant of his private or inner life. But by the combination of the two we are enabled in some measure to draw out a sketch of his history, and to form some adequate estimate of his character and influence. The traditions of the primitive Church concerning Paul are surprisingly few, when we consider his missionary labours and apostolic influence; and they are so mixed with fables and inaccuracies as to be in general wholly untrustworthy. The record of the life of Paul which we have from these two sources is extremely imper-

fect. The book of Acts does not profess to be a biography of Paul. It is a history of the growth of Christianity, and therefore only a selection of events in his career is given. His early life, with the exception of a few incidental notices, is entirely omitted, great portions of his biography remain a blank, long periods are passed over in a single sentence, and numerous incidents to which reference is made in the Epistles are left unrecorded. The Epistles, on the other hand, are few in number, thirteen in all—a mere fragment of what he, to whom “the care of all the churches” was committed, must have written. These Epistles, too, are not in the least degree of a professedly biographical character. Rather the modesty of the apostle prevented references to himself, and it was only when the state of the churches to which he wrote made it necessary that he felt constrained to introduce personal allusions. The incompleteness of the record is evident from an enumeration of his sufferings which he gives in one of his early Epistles: “Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep.”^a Only two instances in this catalogue of hardships are alluded to in the Acts. Not one of the five times when he was scourged by the Jews is mentioned; only one of the three scourgings with rods, namely, that which occurred at Philippi, is recorded; the stoning at Lystra is related, but the history is entirely silent concerning his three shipwrecks.

2. PAUL'S BIRTHPLACE.^b We have his own

^a 2 Cor. xi. 24, 25.

^b Jerome, one of the greatest of the fathers of the Latin Church, who died A.D. 420, gives the tradition that Paul was born in Gischala, a small town of Galilee, from which his parents had to emigrate on its capture by the Romans. There does not seem to be any foundation for this statement, not even to the extent of warranting the supposition that Paul's ancestors were originally Galileans. *Canon Farrar, however, with some others, think that the tradition is true to that extent.*

declaration ^a that he was born in Tarsus, the capital of Cilicia. At the time of the apostle's birth this was no mean city. Situated on a fertile plain, on the banks of the river Cydnus which flowed through it, it was then one of the most populous and flourishing towns in the eastern part of the Roman empire.^b It had obtained the privilege of a free city, and was governed by its own laws. It was celebrated for the illustrious men to whom it gave birth. One of these, indeed, was Athenodorus, the tutor of Augustus, a man high in imperial favour, and who was probably governor of Cilicia when Paul was born. But in all ages its chief renown will consist in its being the birth-place of Paul, who of all men has impressed his influence most indelibly upon the world. It is now a poor and dirty town, known by the name of Tarsous, very different from the Tarsus of Paul, though it still has a population of thirty thousand. Paul was accordingly a Hellenist or Greek Jew by birth, as distinguished from a Hebrew or Palestinian Jew. He indeed calls himself a "Hebrew of the Hebrews."^c But by this expression he means only to assert his purely Jewish descent—that he was a Jew without any mixture of Gentile blood. His native language was Greek, though without doubt he was accustomed also to the use of the Hebrew tongue.^d

3. DATE OF PAUL'S BIRTH. The date of Paul's birth may be fixed within a year or two. At the martyrdom of Stephen, A.D. 36 or 37, he is called a young man,^e and twenty-six or twenty-seven years afterwards, A.D. 63, writing to Philemon he speaks of himself as being such an one as Paul the aged.^f Of course such statements are indefinite, but we cannot be far wrong in supposing that he would be sixty when

^a Acts xxi. 39; xxii. 3.

^b The geographer Strabo, born about B.C. 54, observes that it was populous, extremely powerful, and had the appearance of a capital.

^c Phil. iii. 5.

^e Acts vii. 58.

^d Acts xxi. 40.

^f Philemon 9.

he wrote the Epistle to Philemon, thirty-three at the martyrdom of Stephen, and consequently born about the year 3 of the Christian era. It is also to be remarked that he must at least have been thirty at the death of Stephen, for if he had been under that age the Sanhedrim would not have entrusted him with a duty so important as the commission to Damascus.

4. PAUL'S FAMILY. Paul's parents were both Jews; he was of pure Jewish blood. He belonged to the stock of Benjamin,^a and was thus a member of that famous tribe which gave birth to the first monarch, and which on the revolt of the tribes remained faithful to the house of David. We know nothing of his mother. She is only once alluded to, and that in the vaguest manner.^b But from what we know of pious Jewish matrons we may well suppose that, like the youthful Timothy, he owed much of his religious training to maternal influence.^c His father was a Jew of the strictest order. Paul calls himself the son of a Pharisee,^d and states that he was educated "after the most straitest sect of the Jewish religion."^e Although the father of Paul was a Hellenist, living in the Greek city of Tarsus, yet he was no imitator of the Greeks, but kept carefully to Jewish manners and customs. The heathenism around him would only serve to render him more strict in his observance of the ancestral faith. Thus Paul would be early trained to piety, after the manner of the Jews, and would have all the advantages of being brought up in a religious family. Thus, too, he would be sheltered from that corrupt heathenism in the midst of which he lived. This pious education which he received at home was one considerable element in his preparation for his future life of usefulness in the church of Christ. There is little men-

^a Rom. xi. 1; Phil. iii. 5.

^b Gal. i. 15.

^c 2 Tim. i. 5.

^d Acts xxiii. 16.

^e Acts xxvi. 5.

tion of Paul's relatives in Scripture. He had a sister who was married and resided in Jerusalem.^a In the Epistle to the Romans, Paul sends salutations to Adronicus, Junias, and Herodion, whom he calls his kinsmen.^b But it is doubtful whether by this appellation he intends relatives, and does not merely denote Jews or fellow-countrymen.

5. PAUL'S CITIZENSHIP. His father enjoyed the valuable privilege of Roman citizenship. Paul at Philippi and before the Roman commander Lysias asserts that he was a Roman, and that he inherited this privilege—that he was free born.^c This privilege though then rarely conferred upon Jews, was not unknown among them. The Jewish historian Josephus (born A. D. 37), for example, mentions several Jews resident at Ephesus who were citizens of Rome. Paul could not have been entitled to it because he was a citizen of Tarsus; for although Tarsus was a free city, and, as such, was exempt from certain taxes and had rulers of its own, it did not possess the privilege of citizenship.^d He must have inherited it, as he tells us, from his father. The right of Roman citizenship might be conferred by the favour or caprice of the emperor; or it was given as the reward of some service done to the state. A slave, too, who was manumitted according to certain forms became a citizen. Or, as is indicated in the Acts, the privilege might be purchased.^e In one or other of these ways, most probably for service done to the state by Paul's father, this great possession had come into the family.^f

6. PAUL'S TWOFOLD NAME. The apostle is known to us by two names, Saul and Paul; the one

^a Acts xxiii. 6.

^b Rom. xvi. 7, 11.

^c Acts xvi. 37; xxii. 28.

^d Tarsus was not like Philippi a Roman colony.

^e Acts xxii. 28.

^f In the reign of Augustus, at which period Paul was born, the privilege of citizenship was jealously guarded and highly prized; afterwards it became more common, and was not so highly valued.

being his Jewish and the other his Roman name. At his circumcision, on the eighth day, he would receive from his father the name of Saul—the *asked* or *desired* of God—doubtless a favourite name among the Jews who belonged to the tribe of Benjamin, rendered illustrious by the Benjamite Saul, the first king of Israel. But being both a Hellenist and a Roman citizen, he had also a Roman name, Paul, by which he would be known outside of the Jewish circle. We learn that it was the custom among Greek Jews to have two names, the one Hebrew and the other Greek or Roman. We have several instances of this in the New Testament. Thus John bore the Latin name Marcus; Joseph Barsabas was surnamed Justus; Simeon was called Niger; and Jesus, Justus. Sometimes these Greek or Latin names were translations of the Hebrew. In other cases they were chosen on account of a similarity of sound, Jason, for example, being taken as the Greek equivalent for Jesus. For this reason probably Saul was called Paul, the latter being the nearest approach in Latin to the Hebrew name. In the early part of the Acts he is known by the name of Saul. Suddenly, however, the name Paul is introduced,^a and Saul dropped. So long as his labours were confined to the Jews, the historian retained his Jewish name Saul; but when they were extended to the Gentiles he mentions him by his Roman name Paul.^b

7. PAUL'S PERSONAL APPEARANCE AND DISPOSITION. There is an allusion to the personal appearance of the apostle in one of his Epistles, where he observes that it was mentioned as a reproach that his bodily presence was weak. The descriptions which we have of him outside of Scripture are not

^a Acts xiii. 9.

^b It is, we consider, an erroneous supposition (although it is supported by some eminent scholars) that this change of name had any connection with the conversion of Sergius Paulus; both names belonged to the apostle from the first.

much to be regarded. There is, however, a wonderful agreement among them. He is described as being of short stature, with a high forehead, shaggy eyebrows, dark hair, an aquiline nose, and a most winning expression of countenance. He would certainly have a decidedly Jewish caste of features, and, though probably he was insignificant in stature, yet the fire of eloquence and inspiration would often light up his countenance. We can easily imagine that he would have in a remarkable degree the power of attracting men. His natural temperament may be gathered from what appears in his Epistles, as well as from his recorded actions; a temperament which was sanctified but not destroyed by grace. He was of a naturally ardent disposition, quick and somewhat irritable in his sensibilities, inspired with intense zeal and earnestness of purpose, high in his aims, true to his convictions and resolute in acting upon them, gifted with great and varied intellectual powers, and possessed of a deeply affectionate nature.

8. PAUL'S TRADE. It would seem that Paul was educated to a particular trade. We are informed that he joined Aquila and Priscilla at Corinth, because he was of the same craft with them, for by occupation they were tent-makers.^a It was the custom of the Jews, even of the richest families, to teach their children some useful trade. The reasons for this were the esteem which the Jews had for trade, and their prudence in providing amid the insecurity of the times against the changes of fortune.^b The occupation to which Paul was trained is called that of a tent-maker. It was doubtless chosen as being the principal trade in his native city Tarsus, which was celebrated for its manufactory of tent-cloth from the hair of the Cilician goats. Such a trade proved useful

^a Acts xviii. 3.

^b "He," says Rabbi Judah, "that teaches not his son a trade, does the same as if he taught him to be a thief."

to Paul, as we find him often having recourse to it in after life, that he might not be dependent on his converts. The fact that he laboured at a manual trade, however, cannot be adduced as an argument to prove that his social position was humble. The reverse would on the contrary appear to be the case. The possession by inheritance of the rare privilege of Roman citizenship is a presumption that he belonged to a family of outward distinction; and his being sent for the completion of his education to Jerusalem is a proof that his father was in the possession of considerable means.

9. PAUL'S EDUCATION AT TARSUS. Tarsus, where Paul spent his youth, was celebrated for its learning; it was the seat of a distinguished university. "The inhabitants of this city," observes an old Greek geographer Strabo, "apply to the study of philosophy and to the whole compass of learning with so much ardour, that they surpass Athens, Alexandria, and every other place which can be named where there are schools and lectures for philosophers." The same writer gives a long list of illustrious men who were natives of Tarsus, and educated at its university. Some suppose that Paul received his early education and acquired his knowledge of Greek literature in the schools of Tarsus. We find traces of this knowledge in his speeches and Epistles. In his address to the Athenians he quotes from the Cilician poet Aratus, or the Stoic Cleanthes;^a in the First Epistle to the Corinthians there is a quotation from Menander, an Athenian poet,^b and in his Epistle to Titus, another from Epimenides of Crete.^c But when we consider the strict Jewish proclivities of his father, we may judge it highly improbable that he would permit his son to study in the Greek schools. Paul's early education would be more Jewish than Greek; according to the Jewish

^a Acts xvii. 28.

^b 1 Cor. xv. 33.

^c Titus i. 12.

method of training he would begin to study at five the Scriptures, and at the age of ten the traditions of the elders, while at thirteen he would be confirmed as a member of the Jewish community. Still we cannot conceive that the intellectual atmosphere of Tarsus would be without influence upon him. His daily contact with students must have sharpened his faculties, widened his sympathies, and inspired him with a thirst for knowledge. Tarsus had also a celebrated gymnasium on the banks of the river Cydnus; and it was probably from having seen so often in his youth the Greek games in his native city, that the apostle was led to the use of the numerous illustrations taken from them in his Epistles.

10. PAUL'S EDUCATION AT JERUSALEM.

Jerusalem was the great seat of learning to which the wealthy Jews from all quarters of the world sent their children; and, as we learn from numerous allusions, it was in Jerusalem that Paul finished his education.^a Here were the great rabbinical schools; here learned rabbis lectured and taught the children of Abraham the law of Moses and the traditions of the fathers. At the very time that Paul was engaged with his studies, there was One growing up in a remote village of Galilee, who was not only to revolutionize but to redeem the world, and whom Paul was to own as his Lord and Master. Paul's teacher was Gamaliel, the most celebrated of Jewish rabbis of his time. He was one of the seven to whom the dignified epithet of Rabban was given. His father was Rabbi Simeon, whom some suppose on doubtful grounds to have been the same who took the infant Jesus in his arms; and his grandfather was the celebrated Hillel, one of the founders of the sect of the Pharisees. The Jewish writers are at one with the sacred historian^b as to the estimation in which this remarkable man was held, not only by the learned class, but also by the people. He was called the

^a Acts xxiii. 3; xxvi. 4.

^b Acts v. 34.

Beauty of the law, and it is a saying in the Talmud, that since Rabban Gamaliel died the glory of the law has ceased. He was a Pharisee of liberal views, and was himself addicted to the study of Greek philosophy. He was to a considerable extent free from the intolerance of Judaism, and on a remarkable occasion interfered successfully on behalf of the apostles.^a Under the tuition of this learned rabbi, Paul profited in the Jewish religion above many his equals in his own nation.^b We can easily suppose that he would be Gamaliel's most distinguished scholar. His great abilities would enable him easily to acquire knowledge, and his eagerness would make him a most diligent student. We see traces of this learning in his Epistles, in his apt quotations from the Old Testament, in his mode of reasoning, and in his application of Jewish types. His rabbinical learning was consecrated to the service of Christianity, and through the inspiration of the Spirit was an important means of deriving rich gospel truths from the types and shadows of the Old Testament.

11. PAUL'S PHARISAICAL TENDENCIES. Paul, we have seen, was brought up by his father a Pharisee. Gamaliel, too, under whom he studied, was a leader of the Pharisees, though belonging to the more tolerant school. It does not appear, however, that the pupil was of the teacher's liberal spirit, or sympathized with his tolerance for the opinions of others. On the contrary, his zeal for rigorous Judaism seems to have increased rather than diminished; and to this his strength of conscientious conviction would lead him. We cannot, indeed, suppose that he would pay much attention to the trivialities of Pharisaism—to the tithing of mint and anise and cummin. But we can imagine how eager he would be in working out a righteousness of his own; how careful and scrupulous in his performance of legal duties; how determined would be his endeavours to

^a Acts v. 40.

^b Gal. i. 14.

walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. Paul could never be lukewarm in his religion ; decision and zeal were the conditions of his religious life. We think that even at this time he must have had his religious struggles ; he must have passed through much spiritual experience. He could not avoid being dissatisfied with his own religious state ; the obedience which he rendered to the law was that of a slave, and he must have felt that he could never answer all the demands of conscience. He was too earnest-minded to be satisfied with mere legal performances, and he aimed at a righteousness to which he could not attain. One thing is perfectly certain, that Paul before his conversion possessed an unblemished moral character—“touching the righteousness which was in the law, he was blameless.”^a In after life he could appeal with the most perfect confidence to his bitterest enemies in proof of his pure morality.^b He indeed calls himself the chief of sinners ; but he does so not with reference to any moral stain on his conduct, but because he persecuted the church of Christ ; and even this very persecution of the Christians proceeded from pure motives. It was zeal for what he conceived to be right that induced him to persecute, and he ever fearlessly acted up to his convictions.^c

12. DID PAUL SEE CHRIST? If Paul was in Jerusalem during the lifetime of our Saviour it is an interesting question, whether on any of our Lord's visits to Jerusalem he ever saw Him? Might he not have been present even at the crucifixion, forming one of the multitude who gazed on that awful tragedy! We do not hesitate to answer this question in the negative. If Paul had actually seen Christ, when He was on earth, there would surely have been some distinct allusion to it in his Epistles. Nay, we do not see how with his strength of conscience and integrity of purpose he could have resisted the

^a Phil. iii. 6.

^b Acts xxiii. 1.

^c Acts xxvi. 9.

Saviour; or if it is possible to imagine him having done so, it is not easy to understand how he could have abstained from referring to that resistance as the greatest aggravation of his guilt. There are only two expressions which seem to countenance an opposite conclusion, and neither of these can bear that interpretation. He asks in an affirmative tone, "Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?"^a But the allusion is evidently to the appearance of Christ to him on the way to Damascus. And in the Second Epistle to the Corinthians we meet with the expression, "Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more."^b This however, does not refer to a personal acquaintance with the Lord Jesus, but to the legal spirit of the Jews who trusted to outward works and carnal Messianic expectations. Nor indeed is it of himself that he there speaks, but of the Christian community: "Though we once recognised Christ in a carnal point of view, yet now we view Him with very different sentiments." We therefore infer that Paul, long before the public ministry of Christ, had finished his studies at Jerusalem and had returned to Tarsus. Here he would be quietly employed working as a tent-maker, cultivating his mind at the same time by liberal studies, and living up to the light which he then possessed.

13. WAS PAUL MARRIED? There is one other question bearing upon the early life of Paul: Was he married? The affirmative has been maintained by many eminent writers. The ground on which they go is the hypothesis that Paul was a member of the Sanhedrin,^c it being essential that every one

^a 1 Cor. ix. 1.

^b 2 Cor. v. 16.

^c The Sanhedrin, often but less accurately written Sanhedrim, was the highest council of the Jews at this date. The Rabbis traced it back to the seventy elders who were associated with Moses (Num. xi. 16, 17). But its origin is uncertain. Many suppose it to have come into existence soon after the return of the Jews from Babylon. The number of members in the Sanhedrin is generally represented to have been seventy-one. But this, too, is disputed, some considering the

who was so should be married. This supposition they found upon the words of Paul when, with reference to the Christians, he observes, "When they were put to death I gave my voice against them ;"^a which they take to mean that he gave his vote as a member of the Sanhedrin. But this is introducing more into the words than they contain. The simple meaning is that he coincided with the views of those who put the Christians to death. And it is extravagant to suppose that a Tarsian Jew, a Hellenist by birth and a comparative stranger in Jerusalem, would be admitted into the august body of the Sanhedrin, which numbered among its members the most influential men in Jerusalem—the chief among the Jews. The reason then given for affirming Paul's marriage falls to the ground ; he himself, when engaged in his missionary labours, declares that he was unmarried ; and there is not the slightest indication, either in the history or in the Epistles, leading us to infer that he was a widower.

QUESTIONS AND POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

1. *Give instances from the Epistles of incompleteness in the narrative of the Acts.*
2. *Describe the nature and privileges of Roman citizenship.*
3. *Give examples of persons in the New Testament having two names.*
4. *Relate what is known about Gamaliel.*
5. *Sketch the education of Paul.*
6. *State the influence of rabbinical training on Paul.*

number to have been seventy, and others seventy-two. The court consisted of chief priests (that is, the heads of the twenty-four classes into which the priests were divided, along with whom were probably also those who had been high priests), elders, and scribes.—EDITOR.

^a Acts xxvi. 10.

CHAPTER II.

CONVERSION OF PAUL.

14. EARLY CONFLICTS OF CHRISTIANITY WITH JUDAISM (Acts vi.). Four years had scarcely elapsed since the crucifixion, and during that period Christianity had made rapid and steady progress in Jerusalem.^a This success had aroused the jealousy of the Jewish hierarchy, and measures were adopted against the Christians. Their chief opponents in these early days were the Sadducees,^b to which sect the high priest Caiaphas, his father-in-law the influential Annas,^c and other chief men among the Jews belonged. Christianity came first in conflict with them by contradicting their cherished opinions. Twice the apostles were arrested, but on both occasions they were protected;^d the first time by the favour in which they were held by the people, and the second time by the interposition of the Pharisaical faction of the Sanhedrin, acting under the prudent advice of Gamaliel.^e Hitherto the disciples had not come into collision with the Pharisees. The Christians would still be looked upon as strict Jews, regular in their attendance in the temple at the stated hours of prayer,^f worshipping also in the synagogues, and differing from their fellow-countrymen only in their belief that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah. Thus they would be regarded as a new Jewish sect, known by the name of the Nazarenes.^g But this state of matters could not long exist. The spirit of Christianity was too expansive to be confined by the trammels of Judaism. Several

^a Acts ii. 41; iv. 4; vi. 7.

^c Annas was not only father-in-law to Caiaphas, but he himself had been high priest, and five of his sons were advanced to that office in his life-time.

^e Acts v. 33-40.

^f Acts iii. 1

^b Acts iv. 1, 2; v. 17.

^d Acts iv. 3; v. 26.

^g Acts xxiv. 5.

converts had been made among the Hellenists^a or Greek-speaking Jews, who as a body were less bigoted than the Palestinean Jews, and more open to the influences of the Gospel. Among them was Stephen, who is described as "a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost."^b He evidently held more enlarged views of Christianity than the apostles had at this time attained to. He looked forward to a time when the principles of the Gospel would supersede the rites and ceremonies of Judaism, and when the worship of the temple would be abolished or at least greatly modified. Stephen has justly been regarded as the forerunner of Paul in the liberality of his sentiments. His teaching brought Christianity into collision with the Pharisees; that sect was roused to a sense of its danger; Judaism itself was attacked; the worship of the temple was imperiled. Thus both Sadducees and Pharisees combined to oppose the Gospel, and the voice of Gamaliel was no more heard in favour of the disciples.

15. DISPUTATIONS WITH STEPHEN (Acts vi. 8-10). About this time (A.D. 36) Paul returned from Tarsus to Jerusalem. He was a Pharisee with the strongest views regarding the perpetuity of the Mosaic law, and hence he felt himself constrained to oppose this new teaching of Stephen. Among the synagogues enumerated as the scenes of disputes with Stephen, mention is made of that of Cilicia,^c and to this synagogue Paul, as a native of Tarsus, belonged. The subject of the dispute would doubtless be the Messiahship of Jesus. It would appear that Stephen was bold in his attacks on Jewish legalism, and direct in his denunciations of those who persevered in unbelief. We are informed that his opponents were not able to resist the wisdom and spirit with which he spake.^d But as they hardened themselves against the force of his arguments, the only result was to increase their

^a Acts vi. 1.

^b Acts vi. 5, 8.

^c Acts vi. 9.

^d Acts vi. 10.

animosity; and as they could not silence him by reasoning, they determined to do so by might. This was the effect of Stephen's discourse upon Paul. His Pharisaical prejudices were too powerful an obstacle in the way of his conviction; and hence he came prominently forward as the champion of Judaism.^a

16. MARTYRDOM OF STEPHEN (Acts vi. 11—vii. 60). Stephen was arrested and brought before the Sanhedrin. He was accused of speaking blasphemous words against Moses and against God;^b and according to the law blasphemy was a capital crime. Stephen was permitted to make his defence, but the result was only to embitter his accusers. The Sanhedrin forgot their dignity as judges, and the council was converted into a riotous mob. Without any sentence of condemnation, Stephen was dragged from the council room, hurried out of the city and stoned to death.^c The martyrdom of Stephen was an act of popular violence, not the execution of a judicial sentence. The power of putting to death had been taken from the Sanhedrin by the Roman government.^d But it so happened that at this very time there was a vacancy in the Roman procuratorship. Pontius Pilate had been removed, and his successor had not been appointed. Consequently the period was favourable for acts of violence. The narrative relates that at the death of Stephen "the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul."^e This is the first mention of Paul in the Acts. He appears on the stage of Church history as a zealot of the Pharisaical school and a bitter enemy of Christianity. He does not seem to have had any active part in the death of Stephen. But by willingly taking charge of the garments of those who slew him, he showed how heartily he consented to his execution.^f

^a The Christians would now be regarded as a hostile sect, and looked upon as the enemies of the Jewish religion. ^b Acts vi. 11, 12.

^c Acts vii. 51-60. ^d John xviii. 31. ^e Acts vii. 58. ^f Acts xxii. 20.

17. PAUL THE PERSECUTOR (Acts viii. 1-3).

The death of Stephen, instead of satisfying the rage of Paul, only served to inflame his zeal. He now came more openly forward as a persecutor of the Christians.^a In what he did in this character he was without doubt supported by the authority of the Sanhedrin. Access was afforded him into the houses of private individuals, and the public prison was at his command. His zeal and earnestness made him the very instrument which was desired in the hands of the Jewish hierarchy. He spared neither age nor sex, and appears to have formed the resolution to extirpate the name of Jesus. Not only did he employ fines, imprisonments, and scourgings, but what was much worse, he compelled the disciples to blaspheme the holy name of Jesus. To this period of his life Paul frequently refers, both in his speeches and in his Epistles, with the deepest remorse.^b We must not class him, however, among persecutors actuated by a spirit of cruelty, but rather among those who, impelled by zeal for what they have thought right, have felt constrained to do cruel deeds contrary to the benevolent feelings of their nature.^c It was the very intensity of his mistaken but religious zeal for God that caused Paul to regard Christianity as a pernicious heresy, requiring strong measures for its repression.

18. INCREASED DIFFUSION OF THE GOSPEL (Acts viii. 4-40).

In Jerusalem success attended the measures of Paul: "All the disciples were scattered abroad except the apostles." But what appeared to be a hindrance served rather to the diffusion of the Gospel. The church was violently broken up at Jerusalem, but the result was its extension in other quarters. Hitherto the Gospel was chiefly confined to the precincts of the holy city, but

^a Acts viii. 3; ix. 1.

^b Acts xxvi. 10; 1 Cor. xv. 9; Gal. i. 13; 1 Tim. i. 13.

^c Acts xxvi. 9.

now it was diffused abroad. The strong wind of persecution carried the seed of the Gospel to other lands. At first the dispersed went to the neighbouring regions of Judea and Samaria, but soon they spread farther, and some of them travelled as far as Phenice and Cyprus and Antioch, preaching the word.^a

19. PAUL'S COMMISSION TO DAMASCUS.
(Acts ix. 1, 2.) Paul's fierce disappointment at these unexpected effects of the persecution made his zeal burn still more hotly. He determined to follow the disciples into the strange cities whither they had fled. He turned his eyes to Damascus, a city a hundred and forty miles distant, where there were numerous Jews,^b and where he had been informed Christianity had gained a footing. He therefore went to the high priest, then Theophilus, the son of Annas, and requested letters to Damascus, that if he found any Christians there, he might be empowered to bring them bound to Jerusalem.^c The jurisdiction of the Romans over Judea had the effect of extending the influence of the Sanhedrin. It was recognised by the Jews everywhere as the supreme court of the nation, and its mandates were obeyed in the synagogues abroad, especially in cities bordering on Palestine. At this time also it would appear that Damascus was not directly under the Romans, but had been assigned by the Emperor Caligula to Aretas, the King of Arabia Nebatæa^d; and this monarch might probably allow the Jewish authorities to assume larger jurisdiction over their fellow-countrymen than the Romans would permit. The state of Paul's mind at the time of this memorable journey to Damascus is an interesting enquiry. Was he even then passing through a religious crisis? Had the discourses and death of Stephen made a deep impres-

^a Acts viii. 4; xi. 19.

^b It so abounded with Jews that Josephus tells us that during the Jewish war 10,000 of them were killed in one hour.

^c Acts ix. 2; xxii. 5.

^d 2 Cor. xi. 32.

sion upon him, and was there a violent struggle going on within him between his old Pharisaical notions and new convictions? Or was he hardened against Christianity even up to the moment of his conversion, and troubled with no doubts or scruples about what he was doing? Different opinions are entertained on this subject. Paul certainly showed no relenting, and to all appearance his zeal for Judaism was increased rather than abated. One thing, however, is certain, that in the midst of all his errors, he was actuated by a sincere desire to do what was right. The Jewish hierarchy, the Sadducees and Pharisees, persecuted in a great measure from impure and unworthy motives. But with Paul there was always the strong conviction that he was doing God service.

20. CONVERSION OF PAUL (Acts ix. 3-19). We have three accounts of the conversion of Paul; one given us by Luke, and two by Paul himself.^a We present the narrative as it is gathered from a combination of the three. Paul had set out from Jerusalem with an escort which probably was partly on foot and partly on horseback. Their journey was almost accomplished; they were drawing near Damascus. The day was at its height; the sun blazed in full splendour; and instead of resting during the heat, the party hurried on to the accomplishment of their journey. All of a sudden, a light shone down from heaven above the brightness of the sun, and the whole cavalcade were struck to the ground. Some arose and stood speechless, others remained prostrate.^b A strange sound was heard by all, like the rolling of distant thunder. To the escort it conveyed no meaning, but to Paul the voice was distinct, and intelligible.^c It spoke to him, called him by

^a Acts ix. 1-9; xxii. 6-10; xxvi. 12-19.

^b In Acts ix. 7, we are informed that the men who journeyed with Paul stood speechless, and in Acts xxvi. 14 that they all fell to the ground.

^c The men who journeyed with Paul heard a noise, Acts ix. 7; but they understood it not, Acts xxii. 9.

name, and preferred against him a terrible charge. "He heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" And when, trembling and astonished, he replied, "Who art thou, Lord?" the voice spoke a second time, "I am Jesus of Nazareth whom thou persecutest; it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks."^a And now Paul must have felt with all the certainty of intuition, that this Jesus of Nazareth, whose disciples he was persecuting, was in truth the Lord's Anointed, and that he himself was a miserable self deceiver, who, whilst he thought that he was doing God service, had been in reality endeavouring to overthrow His cause in the world. His obstinate will was instantly subdued, and he exclaimed, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" The voice again addressed him, "Arise and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." Paul arose from the earth; but when he opened his eyes he saw no man. He was blinded by the brightness of the light.^b His companions also arose confounded. The impression made upon them was doubtless strong, but it was indistinct. They understood not the words which were spoken. And thus the cavalcade again moved on, and Paul entered Damascus in a very different manner from what he had thought of. Instead of committing the Christians to prison, he himself was led captive, humbled, afflicted, blind, the prisoner of Jesus Christ. He was brought to the house of one Judas, in the street called Straight.^c For three days his blindness continued; he did neither eat nor drink; no friend entered the house. Left alone to his own thoughts, passing through the greatest spiritual crisis, struggling into second birth, Paul found relief in prayer; and

^a Acts ix. 5 compared with Acts xxvi. 14 in Revised Version.

^b Acts ix. 8; xxii. 11.

^c The street Straight is still in existence, leading right through the city from the eastern to the western gate, and the traditionary house of Judas is still pointed out.

he arose from his knees for ever altered, henceforth the servant of Jesus Christ. On the third day of his blindness, Ananias, a Christian in Damascus, being directed by the Lord in a vision, came to the house of Judas. He found Paul engaged in prayer, and addressed him as a Christian brother who, though once a persecutor, was now the chosen vessel of the Lord.^a Ananias put his hands upon Paul, and immediately his sight was miraculously restored. His conversion was followed by his baptism. He made a public acknowledgment of his faith in Christ, and joined that little band of disciples whom he came with letters from the Sanhedrin to persecute and disperse. Thus the great change has taken place; he is converted from Saul the persecutor into Paul the apostle. The same truthfulness, zeal, earnestness, and moral courage which actuated him before conversion remain, but his sentiments are revolutionized. From being a Pharisaical bigot, he becomes the greatest opponent of Pharisaism, the apostle of the uncircumcision. From being a persecutor of the Christians, he becomes the greatest Christian missionary the world has ever seen. Henceforth his indomitable zeal and earnestness of purpose are consecrated to the cause of Christ. The stream of his life flows with equal impetuosity, but it forms for itself a new channel. The scales which fell from his bodily eyes were emblematic of the ignorance and prejudice which had concealed the truth from him, and which were now removed from his mental vision.^b

21. SOJOURN IN ARABIA (Acts ix. 20-22; Gal. i. 17). It would appear that immediately after his conversion and baptism, Paul commenced to preach in the synagogues of Damascus with all the zeal of a new convert.^c But this, his first preaching, did not continue long. He became conscious of the need of retirement. The change which had come

^a Acts ix. 17.

^b 2 Cor. iv 6.

^c Acts ix. 20, 21.

over his views was so great that he felt that he must mature his ideas. Accordingly he quitted Damascus and retired into Arabia.^a We need not suppose that he went to the peninsula of Sinai, or even to any great distance from Damascus, for that town bordered on Arabia, and, as we have already seen, was under the government of an Arabian king. How long he remained there is uncertain. He himself tells us that it was not until three years after his conversion that he went up to Jerusalem ;^b and the probability is that the greater part of these three years was spent in Arabia. Here he devoted his time, not to preaching the Gospel, but to private meditation and prayer. These three years of preparation spent in seclusion were analogous to those three years which the other apostles spent in immediate intercourse with the Lord. This retirement has also its counterpart in the life of Christ Himself, who, before the commencement of His public ministry, withdrew into the wilderness to pray. It was in Arabia that Paul received those revelations of Gospel truth which qualified him for being the apostle of the Gentiles, and the most renowned teacher of Christianity. He himself tells us that he was neither taught the Gospel by the older apostles, nor instructed by those who were disciples before him ; but that he received it by immediate revelation from Jesus Christ.^c Like the other apostles he was directly instructed by the Lord ; the difference being that they were instructed by Christ when He sojourned in this world ; he by Christ now exalted in heaven.

22. PAUL'S FLIGHT FROM DAMASCUS (Acts ix 23-25). Paul returned to Damascus,^d fully equipped

^a Gal. i. 18. The journey to Arabia is not mentioned in the Acts, because it belongs not to the public, but to the private life of the apostle.

^b Gal. ii. 18.

^c Gal. i. 11, 12.

^d Gal. i. 17

as the ambassador of Jesus Christ. He could now preach the Gospel with new power and greater fulness. The opposition of the unbelieving Jews was aroused. They saw in Paul a renegade and an apostate, and therefore their hatred to him was the more embittered. At first they disputed with him in the synagogues. But Paul, trained in the school of Gamaliel, employed his knowledge of the Scriptures in defence of Christianity; and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that Jesus is the very Messiah.^a The unbelieving Jews at length proceeded to take counsel to kill him. The official governor of Damascus, called the ethnarch under Aretas the king, was favourable. He gave them a guard of soldiers, and a watch was set at the gates of the city to prevent Paul's escape.^b The disciples, however, adopted measures for his protection. During the night they let him down the wall in a basket through a window of one of those houses which in oriental cities overhang the city wall.^c Similar instances of escape are mentioned in the Old Testament.^d

23. PAUL'S RECEPTION AT JERUSALEM (Acts ix. 26, 27). Paul having escaped from Damascus proceeded to Jerusalem. Three years had elapsed since he had left that city, and he now (A.D. 40) returned an altered man. He had gone forth as the commissioner of the high priest Theophilus to persecute the Christians; he now returned the avowed adherent of Christianity. Of course his former associates would now regard him with hatred; this he fully expected and was prepared for. But he must have felt some disappointment when he found himself looked upon with suspicion by the disciples.^e

^a Acts ix. 22. It is by no means improbable that it was now that Paul suffered one of those five scourgings in the synagogue to which he alludes in 2 Cor. xi. 24.

^b 2 Cor. xi. 32, 33. Some suppose that the ethnarch was the Jewish chief magistrate.

^c There are such houses in the wall of Damascus at the present day.

^d Josh. ii. 15; 1 Sam. xix. 12.

^e Acts ix. 26.

In order to understand this, we must put ourselves in the place of the disciples. Paul had been one of their bitterest and most unrelenting persecutors ; he had used every means in his power against them ; he was the accredited commissioner of the high priest. They must indeed have heard the strange report of his conversion, which, however, had happened three years before. During the intervening period, too, Paul had been unheard of, and this would occasion grave doubts as to the value of the report. The impression at first made must have diminished by the lapse of time, and fears might naturally arise that Paul had apostatized, if indeed he had ever been converted. When we remember, too, that he was not only a persecutor but an inquisitor, we need not be surprised that the disciples received him with some degree of suspicion. Besides it was a thing unheard of that he who was a violent persecutor of a cause should be converted into one of its ardent promoters. Paul is almost the only example of a persecutor being changed into a missionary. Barnabas, however, one of the principal men of the Christian community, espoused his cause. It is not necessary to suppose a previous acquaintance between them. The generous disposition of Barnabas is sufficient to account for the interest which he took. He was convinced of the reality of Paul's conversion, and at once introduced him to the apostles.^a It is to this visit to Jerusalem that Paul alludes in the Epistle to the Galatians ;^b and from this it would appear that the apostles, to whom Barnabas introduced Paul, were only Peter and James, the Lord's brother. Paul remained as a guest in Peter's house for fifteen days.

24. PAUL IN JERUSALEM (Acts ix. 28, 29). These fifteen days were employed in preaching the Gospel. It would seem as if the spirit of the martyr Stephen had entered into him. He frequented the

^a Acts ix. 27.

^b Gal. i. 18, 19.

same synagogues, disputed with the same opponents and the result was the same,—“they went about to slay him.”^a But this was not so easily accomplished as it had been in the case of Stephen. The Roman authority under the procurator Marullus was then firmly established. To save him, however, from private assassination, the disciples strongly urged him to depart. It was at this time that Paul had that vision in the temple to which he refers in his speech from the stairs of Fort Antonia.^b It may be that the solicitations of his friends were not sufficient to induce him to leave Jerusalem. His eager desire to save his countrymen, and to remedy in some measure the evils which he had done when a persecutor, impelled him to remain in spite of the dangers which beset him. It required a revelation from Christ Himself to cause him to comply with the importunity of his friends and to depart.

25. SOJOURN IN TARSUS (Acts ix. 30). The disciples brought him down to Cæsarea, the renowned sea-port of Herod the Great, and from Cæsarea he journeyed to Tarsus.^c He himself says that on his departure from Jerusalem he came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia.^d His journey through Syria to Cilicia might be made either by proceeding from Cæsarea to Tarsus by land, or more probably by sailing from Cæsarea to Seleucia, the port of Antioch, and then going on by land from Antioch to Tarsus. Thus Paul was again in his native city. He had left it a Pharisee, a zealot for Judaism; he returned to it a Christian, about to commence his apostolic career. What effect the change had upon his own family we know not. What effect it had upon the world the history of eighteen centuries has declared. Paul remained for several years (A.D. 40-42) in Tarsus. These years, however, were spent not in retirement as in Arabia,

^a Acts ix. 29.

^c Acts ix. 30.

^b Acts xxii. 17, 18.

^d Gal. i. 21.

but in missionary labours. No doubt the churches of Cilicia, afterwards mentioned, owed their origin to this residence of Paul in his native country.^a

QUESTIONS AND POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

1. *State the relation of early Christianity to the Pharisees and the Sadducees.*
2. *State the difference between the Hebrews and Hellenists.*
3. *Give an account of Stephen.*
4. *In what respect was Stephen a fore-runner of Paul?*
5. *Compare the three narratives of Paul's conversion.*
6. *Show how the conversion of Paul is an argument in favour of the truth of Christianity.*
7. *Explain the reasons for the suspicions with which Paul was regarded at Jerusalem.*

CHAPTER III.

PAUL'S FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY.

26. CALL OF THE GENTILES (Acts x. ; xi. 19-21). For the first ten years Christianity was confined to the Jews, the Jewish proselytes, and the Samaritans who, as a nation, had adopted the Jewish religion. The apostles and first teachers did not feel themselves authorised to preach to the Gentiles. The important step of going beyond Judaism was first taken by Peter, who, about A.D. 43, acting upon a Divine revelation, preached the Gospel in Cæsarea to Cornelius, a Roman centurion, and a worshipper of God, though not a proselyte to Judaism. But it was in Antioch, the renowned capital of Syria, that this preaching to the Gentiles was chiefly prac-

^a Acts xv. 23, 41.

tised. To this city several of those who were dispersed by the persecution which arose after the death of Stephen had repaired. Here a small Christian community was formed. At first and probably for a considerable time they preached the word to the Jews only.^a But certain Hellenistic Jews, natives of Cyprus and of Cyrene in Africa, came to Antioch, and breaking through the restraints of Jewish legalism spake to the Greeks or uncircumcised Gentiles,^b preaching the Lord Jesus. These men met with great success. There were many among the inhabitants of Antioch who, dissatisfied with heathenism and longing for a purer religion, embraced Christianity as satisfying their requirements. Accordingly a great number of Gentiles professed their faith in Christ, and united themselves to the Christian church. Thus Antioch became the centre of Gentile Christianity.^c

27. PAUL BROUGHT TO ANTIOCH (Acts xi. 22-26). When tidings of this large accession of Gentile converts came to the church in Jerusalem, it gave rise to mingled feelings. There was doubtless much joy expressed at the conversion of the Gentiles; but there was also the fear lest an unwarranted step had been taken. Besides there was some danger of a schism arising—a Gentile Christian church spring-

^a Acts xi. 19.

^b The correct reading is Greeks, not Grecians (that is Hellenists), as in our version.

^c This preaching to the Gentiles at Antioch appears to have been contemporaneous with but independent of the call of Cornelius. The success of the Gospel among the Gentiles is seen in the name *Christian*, then first given to believers (Acts xi. 26). So long as Christianity was confined to Jews and Jewish proselytes with a sprinkling of Gentiles, Christians would be regarded as a Jewish sect. But when, as at Antioch, the Gentile Christians exceeded in number the Jewish, the necessity of a distinctive name would arise; and no name could be more appropriate than that of the great Founder of their religion. This name could not have been conferred by the Jews, nor is it likely that it was adopted by the disciples themselves. It was probably of Roman origin, the Romans having the custom of calling a political or religious body by the name of its founder or author, as Caesareans, Pompeians, Herodians, &c.

ing up in Antioch, as a rival to the Jewish Christian church in Jerusalem. We must remember the antagonistic relations of Jews and Gentiles, and the extreme difficulty of their meeting together on the platform of a common Christianity. Accordingly the church in Jerusalem resolved to send Barnabas to investigate matters. They could not have made a better selection. He was one of the principal men in the church, himself a Hellenist and a native of Cyprus; a man, too, of a benevolent and conciliatory disposition. When Barnabas came to Antioch, he found nothing to correct, but much to rejoice in. The church was in a flourishing condition; Jews and Gentiles were living in harmony. Those controversies had not arisen, which a few years afterwards were to disturb its peace. Barnabas, however, felt the necessity of having the assistance of one whose zeal was more active and whose preaching was more powerful than his own; and his choice fell on Paul. For the last two years, as we have seen, Paul had been quietly preaching the Gospel in Cilicia, and probably to the Jews only. Accordingly Barnabas repaired to that country, and returned to Antioch in Paul's company. Here, as we are expressly told, Paul and Barnabas continued to preach the Gospel for a full year (A.D. 43-44.)

28. SECOND VISIT OF PAUL TO JERUSALEM (Acts xi. 27-30). It is to this time that we are to refer Paul's second visit to Jerusalem after his conversion. A certain prophet, named Agabus, came from Jerusalem to Antioch, and predicted the occurrence of a great famine in Judea.^a Such a famine, we know from the historian Josephus, did occur in A.D. 44, in the reign of the Roman Emperor Claudius. It was greatly relieved by the munificence of Helena, Queen of Adiabene, and her son Izates, both Jewish proselytes. The disciples of Antioch, out of gratitude for the spiritual benefits

^a Acts xi. 27, 28.

conferred on them,^a resolved to send a contribution to their brethren in Judea. This relief was forwarded by the hands of Paul and Barnabas. This second visit of Paul is unrecorded in the enumeration of his visits which is given in the Epistle to the Galatians,^b those visits only being there referred to which were of importance for the establishment of his apostolic authority. On this occasion it is probable that Paul saw none of the apostles. This visit occurred at the time when the church was suffering from persecution under Herod Agrippa I. James, the son of Zebedee, had been slain with the sword,^c Peter had left Jerusalem, and the other apostles were absent or in concealment.

29. PAUL'S ORDINATION (Acts xiii. 1-3). Paul and Barnabas, having fulfilled their mission, returned to Antioch. Here they remained for some time longer, confirming the disciples in the faith, and preaching the Gospel both to the unbelieving Jews and to the Gentiles as opportunity occurred. The church continued to prosper; there were in it numerous prophets and teachers. But now a much wider area was to be opened up for the Gospel; the church was to become in the highest sense a missionary church; the Gospel was to go forth from Antioch as a centre, and to embrace the world. Whilst the disciples were engaged in worship, an intimation was made by the Holy Ghost, probably through the instrumentality of one of the prophets, that Barnabas and Saul should be set apart for the great work of preaching the Gospel to those who were outside of the church, whether Jews or Gentiles. Paul had been previously divinely destined for this office^d; and now the commission which had been privately given to himself, was publicly made known by the Holy Ghost to the church. Accordingly the church of Antioch, in obedience to this divine intimation, by

^a Rom. xv. 27.
^c Acts xii. 1, 2.

^b Gal. i 18; ii. 1.
^d Acts xxvi. 17.

a special act of prayer and fasting, and with the imposition of hands, solemnly set apart Paul and Barnabas to their great work as the first Christian missionaries.

30. PAUL'S COMPANIONS. Here commences Paul's first missionary journey. On this occasion he was accompanied by Barnabas, perhaps his superior in age, and who had been longer in connection with the Christian Church. Barnabas had at first greater authority and influence. He was a man of note among the apostles in Jerusalem, and had shewn his liberality by selling his estate for the good of the poor saints.^a At first he was the leader of the mission: it was Barnabas and Paul.^b Soon, however, he became the subordinate; the order of names is reversed; henceforth we read, Paul and Barnabas.^c Along with him was John, who bore the Latin surname of Mark.^d He is probably the same as the author of the second Gospel, who also became the friend and associate of Peter.^e Mark was a near relative of Barnabas, by some supposed to be his nephew, by others his cousin.^f Barnabas had taken him with him on his return from Jerusalem^g; and, probably on account of the relationship referred to, Mark accompanied Barnabas and Paul on this missionary journey. It is painful to record that after a short time he wearied of the work. He left the mission and returned to Jerusalem; in all probability he shrank from the difficulties and dangers of a missionary life.^h

31. PAUL IN CYPRUS (Acts xiii. 4-12). Paul and Barnabas having left Antioch proceeded to Seleucia, the port of that city, and from that sailed to the island of Cyprus.ⁱ The reasons which induced them to fix on that country as the commencement of

^a Acts iv. 36, 37.

^b Acts xiii. 2, 7.

^c Acts xiii. 50.

^d Acts xiii. 5.

^e 1 Pet. v. 13.

^f Col. iv. 10.

^g Acts xii. 25.

^h Acts xiii. 13.

ⁱ A country interesting to us by being recently attached to the British empire.

their mission were probably the following :—It was in the immediate neighbourhood of Antioch ; it was the native country of Barnabas ^a ; it was inhabited by numerous Jews ; and among those who preached the Gospel at Antioch were men of Cyprus.^b In the apostolic age Cyprus was a populous country, and had numerous flourishing cities. The Jews constituted a chief element in the population. They were patronised by the Ptolemies, the former rulers of the country. Herod the Great, too, farmed the rich copper mines, and this gave employment to numerous Jewish families.^c Cyprus at this time was a senatorial province of the Roman empire, governed by a proconsul.^d Paul and Barnabas landed at Salamis, a large city on the east side of the island, near the town of Famagusta, the Venetian capital of the country. Here they repaired to the synagogues of the Jews and preached the Gospel, but with what success we are not informed. Then, crossing the island from the east to the west coast, they came to Paphos, at that time the capital and the residence of the proconsul. The proconsul at this period was Sergius Paulus, described as a prudent man, evidently one of those Gentiles, numerous in that age, who were earnest inquirers after truth. He had in his company a Jewish magician called Barjesus, who was also known by the name Elymas, or the wise man. His admitting this person into his society is not at variance with his character as a prudent man, because Elymas, being a Jew, was able to give him higher views of religion than heathenism could impart. Still he was not satisfied. He sent, therefore, for Paul and Barnabas, and desired to hear from them the word of God. Elymas, knowing that if Sergius

^a Acts iv. 36.

^b Acts xi. 20.

^c The Jews were so numerous that, in the time of Trajan, they massacred the Gentile population and took possession of the island. Now there is scarcely a Jew in Cyprus.

^d The accuracy of Luke in his designation of the different governors is remarkable, and is a strong corroborative evidence of the authenticity of his history.

Paulus became a convert to Christianity his influence over him would be gone, withstood them. But Paul, under a Divine impulse, sternly rebuked him, and inflicted on him the miraculous punishment of temporary blindness. The governor, convinced of the truth of Christianity by the miracle which had been wrought, became a convert, and was thus one of those few great men after the flesh who in the days of the apostles were converted to Christianity. It is from the time of this journey to Cyprus that the apostle bears the name *Paul* in the narrative of the Acts.

32. PAUL AT PISIDIAN ANTIOCH (Acts xiii. 13-52). From Paphos in Cyprus Paul and his company sailed to Pamphylia and came to its capital Perga. They do not appear, however, to have preached the Gospel there at this time. They seem to have travelled on to Antioch in Pisidia. This town was a free city and a Roman colony. Here Paul, as his custom was, went into the synagogue. As a Jew he took part in the services of the Jewish religion. These consisted of prayers and of the reading of a lesson from the law and a lesson from the prophets, after which an address or sermon was delivered. Any qualified teacher who happened to be present might be asked to address the assembly. Such a request was now made to Paul and Barnabas.^a The substance of Paul's address on this occasion is given in the Acts of the Apostles. The sermon was preached to Jews, but it would also be listened to by Jewish proselytes and other devout Gentiles who, being dissatisfied with their own religion, were attracted to the purer worship of the synagogue. Paul, in speaking to the Jews, adverts to their own Scriptures, and proves from them the Messiahship of Jesus. He traces the principal incidents of His life, and insists chiefly upon the great fact of His resur-

^a It is probable that they had been a few days in town, and already taught the people, and were thus recognised as teachers.

rection. He then proclaimed a free forgiveness through Him to all who repented of their sins and believed on Him, and concluded with a warning against impenitence and unbelief.^a The effect of this discourse was striking. The Jews were much impressed, and requested Paul and Barnabas to preach next Sabbath.^b But still deeper was the impression produced on the devout proselytes. They spread abroad the report of this new doctrine among their countrymen, so that next Sabbath the synagogue was filled, not only with Jews and proselytes, but also with Gentiles.^c No doubt such an opportunity of proclaiming the Gospel of Christ would be eagerly embraced by the apostle. But the Jews, when they saw the vast crowds of Gentiles, were filled with indignation. Their spiritual pride and national bigotry were aroused, and they opposed the apostle, contradicting and blaspheming. Then it was that Paul uttered the memorable words:—"It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken unto you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles."^d For some time longer the apostles preached to the Gentiles, so that not only in Antioch, but throughout the whole region of Pisidia, the word of the Lord was published.^e The Jews, however, found effectual means of opposing the Gospel. It so happened that the wives of many of the principal men in the city were proselytes to Judaism. These the Jews stirred up, and they in turn persuaded their husbands. The consequence was that a persecution was raised against Paul and Barnabas, and for the sake of peace they found themselves compelled to retire.

^a Acts xiii. 16-41.

^b The correct reading of the text is:—"And as they were going out, they (the Jews) requested that those words might be spoken to them on the next Sabbath." Acts xiii. 42.

^c Acts xiii. 44.

^d Acts xiii. 46.

^e Acts xiii. 49.

33. PAUL AT ICONIUM (Acts xiv. 1-6). From Pisidian Antioch Paul and Barnabas proceeded to Iconium, fifty miles distant. This was then the capital of a small tetrarchy, that is, a district ruled by an official called a tetrarch, subject to the Romans. Such a territory somewhat resembled those provinces in India which are ruled by a native prince, dependent on the British government. Here the ministry of Paul and Barnabas was eminently successful. They appear to have had free access to the synagogue, and to have preached there with such effect that a great multitude of Jews and Gentiles believed. Their residence in Iconium continued "a long time," probably several months, and their preaching was accompanied by the performance of miracles which effectually arrested the attention of the inhabitants.^a In consequence of this the town was thrown into a state of excitement. It was divided into two factions—part held with the unbelieving Jews, and part with the apostles. At length the excitement rose to such a pitch that the unbelieving Jews and the Gentiles combined in a plot against the apostles to stone them; but they having received information, acted in obedience to their Lord's command, that when persecuted in one city they should flee to another, and repaired to Lystra.

34. PAUL AT LYSTRA AND DERBE^b (Acts xiv. 6-21). It does not appear that there was a synagogue at Lystra. Hence the apostles would preach in the market place and other scenes of public resort, as is the practice of modern missionaries in the East. One of Paul's constant hearers was a lame man who became deeply impressed. Paul saw that he had faith to be healed, and by the impulse of the Spirit, he performed a miraculous cure.^c The Lystrians, struck with

^a Acts xiv. 3.

^b Luke calls Lystra and Derbe cities of Lycaonia, but this was the name of a district not of a province.

^c Acts xiv. 8-10.

amazement at what had happened, supposed that the gods, in accordance with a local myth, had visited their city. They regarded Barnabas as Jupiter, and Paul as Mercury. They brought oxen and garlands, and rushed to the doors of the house where the apostles lodged, and would have offered sacrifice to them.^a The apostles at first, on account of their ignorance of the Lycaonian dialect^b in which the people shouted, did not understand the meaning of the tumult. But when they saw the preparations for sacrifice, they instantly rushed among the people and addressed them, showing the folly of idolatry, and exhorting them to turn to the living God.^c In a short time the multitude shewed their fickleness. Hostile Jews came from Pisidian Antioch and Iconium, and persuaded the people, so that they who with difficulty were restrained from worshipping Paul as a god, now stoned him until they thought he was dead.^d When the disciples were standing around him to see if he was yet alive, and if so to help him, Paul, doubtless miraculously strengthened, rose up and came into the city.^e From Lystra Paul and Barnabas came to Derbe, another city of Lycaonia, at no great distance. Here they do not appear to have been followed by their Jewish enemies; and they would enjoy that rest which they so much required. Their preaching was successful at Derbe; they made many disciples. Mention is afterwards made of Gaius of Derbe.^f

35. PAUL'S RETURN TO ANTIOCH. Derbe was the limit of Paul's first missionary journey. Paul and Barnabas had now arrived at the neighbourhood of the well-known pass called the Cilician gates. Thence they might have proceeded to Tarsus,

^a "They brought oxen and garlands to the gates," more probably to the doors of the house where the apostles resided, than to the gates of the city.

^b Acts xiv. 11.

^c Acts xiv. 14-18.

^d Acts xiv. 19.

^e It is to this stoning that Paul alludes in 2 Cor. xi. 25; see also 2 Tim. iii. 11.

^f Acts xx. 4.

and from that by a short voyage to Antioch. But instead of this they retraced their steps. They had been forced by persecution suddenly to forsake the churches which they had planted before these were properly established in the faith. From Derbe, therefore, they proceeded to Lystra, Iconium, and Pisidian Antioch, confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith.^a From Pisidian Antioch they came to Perga, where they had formerly landed from Cyprus. Then they had merely passed through, but now they preached the Gospel.^b From Perga they proceeded to Attalia, and from that seaport sailed to Antioch. Thus closed Paul's first missionary journey. He had preached the Gospel in the island of Cyprus and in the three Asiatic districts of Pamphylia, Pisidia, and Lycaonia. He had also founded at least four Christian churches, namely, those in Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe. The space traversed was small compared with the countries visited by Paul in his second and third missionary journeys. The period occupied might be about three years (A.D. 45-48).

36. CONTENTIONS IN THE CHURCH OF ANTIOCH (Acts xv. 1, 2). Whilst Paul remained at Antioch, an unhappy contention arose between the Jewish and the Gentile converts, which had nearly the effect of severing the church into two hostile camps. It would appear that hitherto mutual forbearance had been shown by Jews and Gentiles; they had regarded each other as brethren; they had associated together; several points with regard to the Jewish law had been left as open questions. But certain men came down from Judea, the headquarters of those who held strong Jewish opinions, pretending, as may be inferred, to have been sent by the apostles at Jerusalem.^c They came

^a Acts xiv. 21, 22.

^b Acts xiv. 25.

^c Acts xv. 1, 24; see also Gal. ii. 4.

purposely to promulgate their views at Antioch, the chief seat of Gentile Christianity. The doctrine which they taught was that circumcision was essential for the salvation of the Gentiles. Nor was such an opinion wanting in plausibility. The Jewish religion was undeniably of Divine origin, and circumcision was the badge of the covenant. It was not easy, therefore, for a Jew of strong Pharisaical views to admit that its observance was to be abolished, or at least regarded as unessential. All the attachment of a Jew to his national religion, and all his pride in his peculiar privileges, were opposed to this; and hence we are not to wonder at the extreme conservatism of a large body of the Jewish converts. In consequence of this teaching the peace of the church of Antioch was disturbed. Many of the Jewish converts were won over to the opinion of these Judaizers, and the faith of some of the Gentile converts was shaken. The controversy was of vital importance: if circumcision was necessary, the Gospel system would be overthrown and the progress of Christianity arrested; but if it was unnecessary, then Christianity might have free course and its universality would be established.

37. COUNCIL OF JERUSALEM (Acts xv. 2-35; Gal. ii. 1-10). To put an end to this controversy, the church of Antioch determined that Paul and Barnabas, now the most prominent members of that church, should go to the apostles and elders about this question. In the Epistle to the Galatians Paul says that he went up by revelation. But this is not at variance with the narrative, as the brethren may have been divinely directed to send Paul and Barnabas. Luke informs us that certain brethren of the church of Antioch accompanied them;^a and among these, as we learn from the Epistle to the Galatians, was Titus, a Gentile convert.^b Paul tells us that this journey to Jerusalem occurred fourteen

^a Acts xv. 2.

^b Gal. ii. 3.

years after his conversion,^a consequently in A.D. 51. The deputies of the church of Antioch were cordially received by the church at Jerusalem, and the information which they gave of the conversion of the Gentiles caused great joy among the brethren.^b It was probably before the public discussion of the question concerning the circumcision of the Gentiles that Paul had that private interview with the three pillars of the church, Peter, James, and John, which is alluded to in the Epistle to the Galatians.^c He gave them a full account of the nature of the Gospel which he preached among the Gentiles, and of his reasons for not insisting on the observances of the law of Moses. These three apostles cordially agreed with him, and gave to him and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship. The so-called council of Jerusalem then took place. Not only the apostles and elders, but the whole church came together.^d There was much disputation; the judaizing party had their supporters in the assembly; a demand was made for the circumcision of Titus, but to this Paul would not for one moment yield. To do so would have been to give up the whole point.^e At length, in consequence of the address of Peter,^f and still more so of that of James,^g who appears to have been president of the assembly, the discussion terminated in favour of the freedom of the Gentiles. Circumcision was declared to be unnecessary, and thus Gentile Christianity could now be propagated without hindrance. All the obstacles which stood in the way of its diffusion were removed. Paul and Barnabas, accompanied by Judas and Silas, who were sent from the church of Jerusalem, returned to Antioch.^h The church assembled together, when the decree of the apostles and elders was publicly read, and caused great joy among the brethren. The harmony of the

^a Gal. ii. 1.

^d Acts xv. 23, 25.

^g Acts xv. 13-21.

^b Acts xv. 3, 4.

^e Gal. ii. 3-5.

^h Acts xv. 27, 30.

^c Gal. ii. 2.

^f Acts xv. 7-11.

church was again for a time restored; and Jewish and Gentile Christians again met on a footing of equality.

38. CONTEST WITH PETER (Gal. ii. 11-23).

It is to this period that we assign the contest of Paul with Peter, which is mentioned in the Epistle to the Galatians. Peter, it would appear, went down from Jerusalem on a visit to the church of Antioch. He had heard so much of its flourishing condition, that he wished to have the pleasure of seeing it himself. He associated freely with the Gentile converts, and his visit was hailed by all as a cause of joy. Some judaistic teachers, however, came down from Jerusalem. They were strict in their notions of Jewish purity, and held it unlawful to eat with the Gentiles, as by doing so they might be defiled. Peter, carried away for the time being by the same feeling of timidity which induced him to deny his Lord, withdrew from the Gentiles and manifested a sinful compliance with the prejudices of the Jews. His example was contagious. Other Jewish Christians followed, and even Barnabas, one of the apostles of the uncircumcision, was carried away by the current. Again the peace of the church of Antioch was disturbed, and here, unfortunately, by the pernicious example of those who were regarded as the leaders of Christianity. Then it was that Paul came boldly forward and rebuked Peter for his inconsistency; and no doubt the rebuke was well taken, and the fault corrected. Peter, like most impulsive men, was ready to acknowledge the error which he had committed. It is to be observed that no change of opinion is attributed to Peter, but merely an inconsistency of conduct. It was an inconsistency, however, which, if unchecked, might have led to the gravest consequences. Nor is there any trace of a disagreement between these great apostles. Their writings show that they taught the same gospel, viewing it in the

light of their individual peculiarities; and in his last Epistle Peter speaks of the writings of his beloved brother Paul.^a

QUESTIONS AND POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

1. *Why is it probable that the name Christian is not of Jewish or Christian but of Roman origin?*
2. *Give an account of Barnabas.*
3. *Assign the reasons why Paul and Barnabas first repaired to Cyprus.*
4. *Trace Paul's argument in his discourse at Pisidian Antioch.*
5. *Give an account of the Council at Jerusalem.*
6. *Reconcile the account given in Gal. ii. 1-10 with the account given in the Acts.*

CHAPTER IV.

PAUL'S SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY.

39. DISPUTE WITH BARNABAS (Acts xv. 36-39). After residing for some time longer at Antioch, Paul proposed to Barnabas (A.D. 52) to make a journey of visitation among the churches which they had planted about three years ago. An unhappy contention now arose between them, the occasion of which was Mark. Barnabas being attached to Mark as his near relative,^b and seeing in him many good qualities, was anxious that he should accompany them; but Paul, viewing with displeasure his defection on their former journey, declined to permit him. The dispute was so warm that these devoted missionaries, who had laboured so amicably together, separated, never more to be united in the work of the Lord. Both were actuated by pure motives,

^a 2 Pet. iii. 15, 16.

^b Col. iv. 10

and both were examples of human infirmity. Barnabas was loath to discourage the ardour of a youthful disciple ; Paul felt that the interests of the individual must yield to the general interests of the mission. But this separation was conducive to the good of the church. Instead of one mission, there were now two, and thus more countries were visited, and the principles of the Gospel were more widely disseminated. Nor are we to suppose that Paul and Barnabas parted in such anger as finally divided them in sympathy. The separation would be painful to both ; and Paul makes honourable mention of Barnabas in his Epistles.^a Afterwards, too, not only was he fully reconciled to Mark, but he employed him as his assistant in the ministry.^b

40 PAUL'S COMPANIONS. The companions of Paul on his second missionary journey were Silas, Timothy, and Luke. Silas accompanied him from the commencement. He was one of the two deputies sent by the church of Jerusalem to Antioch,^c and was regarded as a chief man among the brethren of the mother church. The Latin form of his name, Silvanus, renders it probable that he was a Hellenistic Jew, and like Paul he possessed the privilege of Roman citizenship.^d He is associated with Paul in several of his Epistles,^e and is supposed to be the same as Silvanus, the companion of Peter.^f As Silas supplied the place of Barnabas, so Timothy was the substitute of Mark. This youthful disciple, converted by Paul on his first missionary journey, joined the mission, near its commencement, at Lystra, of which town he was a native. His grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice are honourably mentioned as women remarkable for their piety, and for their care in imparting a religious education to Timothy.^g Whilst his mother was a Jewess, his

^a 1 Cor. ix. 6 ; Gal. ii. 9.

^b Col. iv. 10 ; 2 Tim. iv. 11 ; Philem. 24.

^d Acts xvi 37.

^e 1 Thes. i. 1 ; 2 Thes. i. 1.

^c Acts xv. 27.

^f 1 Pet. v. 12.

^g 2 Tim. i. 5 ; iii. 15.

father was a Greek, so that he was related to both Jews and Greeks. He was recommended to Paul by the high esteem in which he was held by the Christians of Lystra and Iconium. In order to remove any obstacle in the way of access to the unbelieving Jews, Paul circumcised him.^a Formerly he had refused to circumcise Titus,^b but the circumstances of the two cases were entirely different. Titus was a Gentile, while the mother of Timothy was a Jewess. The Jewish Christians demanded the circumcision of Titus as essential to the salvation of the Gentiles; Paul, as a matter of prudence, circumcised Timothy, in order to promote the acceptance of the Gospel among the Jews. None of Paul's companions occupied so high a place in his estimation as Timothy. He is mentioned in nearly all Paul's Epistles, and as a son with a father, he served with Paul in the Gospel.^c Luke joined Paul about the middle of this missionary journey at Alexandria Troas. At this point the first person "*we*" is introduced in the narrative, indicating the presence of the author.^d Luke is especially interesting to us as the writer of the book of Acts, and thus in a certain sense the biographer of Paul. He was a physician,^e and hence some fancifully suppose that he attended Paul on account of his health. He accompanied Paul and Silas only as far as Philippi, where he appears to have remained, as the first person is dropped at that point in the narrative and not again resumed until the apostle's return to Philippi on his third missionary journey.^f

41. JOURNEY OF VISITATION (Acts xv. 40-xvi. 5). The second missionary journey commenced as a journey of visitation. The two leaders repaired to their native countries; Barnabas to Cyprus, and Paul to Cilicia. Paul would doubtless revisit Tarsus, his native city, and from Tarsus he would proceed through the Cilician gates to Derbe.

^a Acts xvi. 3.

^d Acts xvi. 10, 11.

^b Gal. ii. 3, 4.

^e Col. iv. 14

^c Phil. ii. 20-22.

^f Acts xx. 6.

This was the last city which he visited on his former journey, but he was now travelling in an opposite direction. He revisited Lystra, where as already stated he was joined by Timothy, and Iconium ; but it is doubtful if he revisited Pisidian Antioch, as that city was not in his present route. To the churches in these places he delivered the decrees of the apostles and elders of Jerusalem ; and in consequence of this authoritative declaration of the freedom of the Gentiles, a great hindrance to the Gospel was removed. The result was that the churches were established in the faith, and increased in number greatly.

42. PAUL IN GALATIA (Acts xvi. 6). Paul, having thus revisited the churches where he had planted the Gospel, entered upon the evangelisation of new countries. "They went through Phrygia and the region of Galatia."^a In these brief words the important mission which resulted in the founding of the Galatian churches, is mentioned ; a proof that we have in the Acts only a meagre account of the labours of the great apostle. Galatia was a peculiar country. Its inhabitants were the descendants of those Gauls who, B.C. 280, invaded Greece and then settled down in this part of Asia. The Galatians, though retaining their national character, had adopted the Greek language, and Galatia at this period formed a Roman province. In one of his chief Epistles Paul addresses the churches of Galatia, and it is probable that on the occasion of the present visit he planted Christianity in the three principal cities—Pessinus, Ancyra, and Tavium. No country embraced the Gospel so readily and cordially. The apostle was welcomed by them as if he were an angel from heaven, yea as if he were Jesus Christ Himself.^b The Galatians were a simple and impulsive people ; they were very open to impression ; nor had they at this time been acted upon by contrary agencies.

^a Acts xvi. 6.

^b Gal. iv. 14, 15.

43. PAUL'S BODILY INFIRMITIES. In the Epistle to the Galatians, Paul states that he preached the Gospel to them because of an infirmity of the flesh ^a; and in several of his other Epistles there are references to his weakness.^b Particularly in the Second Epistle to the Corinthians he speaks of a thorn, or rather a *stake*, in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, sent to buffet him,^c indicating apparently some bodily trouble which impeded his preaching the Gospel, and for deliverance from which he earnestly besought the Lord. His bodily weakness was apparent to others; it was a temptation to cause them to despise him. His bodily presence, he himself tells us, was weak.^d There have been many conjectures about the nature of this affliction. Many suppose that epilepsy is referred to. The opinion most favoured, however, by modern critics is that it was ophthalmia, a complaint in the eyes at once painful and a hindrance. Several texts have been referred to, and various considerations have been advanced in favour of this opinion ^e; and the illness has been connected with that remarkable blindness which occurred on the way to Damascus.^f This, however, is little more than a conjecture. All the passages adduced in its support are capable of a different interpretation. The nature of the affliction was well known at the time, but no authentic tradition has descended to us.

44. JOURNEY TO ALEXANDRIA TROAS (Acts xvi. 7, 8). From Galatia Paul purposed to proceed southwards to the populous and civilised districts of Proconsular Asia. Afterwards he fully preached the

^a Gal. iv. 13, revised edition.

^b 1 Cor. ii. 3; 2 Cor. xi. 30.

^c 2 Cor. xii. 7.

^d 2 Cor. x. 10. It is a question, however, whether either bodily weakness or feeble utterance is in view here. The words may refer rather to the fact that Paul's opponents were saying that, however it might be with his words when he was distant, he would be found to act with less energy when he once was with them, and his speech would not prove of so great account. Compare also the Revised Version.—

Editor

^e Acts xxiii. 1; Gal. iv. 15; vii 11.

^f Acts ix. 9.

Gospel in this district, but on the present occasion he was prevented by the Spirit, either through some Divine intimation or through some hindrance in the Providence of God. The same result attended his attempts to penetrate into the neighbouring districts of Mysia and Bithynia. At length he and his companions arrived at Alexandria Troas,^a a seaport at the entrance of the Hellespont, and one of the principal cities of Proconsular Asia, which had also received from Augustus the privileges of a Roman colony and free city.^b It was here that Luke united himself to the little band of missionaries.

45. PAUL AT PHILIPPI (Acts xvi. 8-40). Whilst Paul with his companions waited in Troas, in uncertainty whither to proceed, a vision appeared to him in the night. A man whom he recognised, either from his garb or from his language, as a native of Macedonia stood before him, and entreated him to come to the assistance of the benighted inhabitants of that country. In compliance with this Divine intimation, Paul, accompanied by Silas, Timothy, and Luke, crossed the Aegean Sea to Neapolis, a city in Thrace, and from that journeyed overland to Philippi, a Roman colony, and one of the principal cities in Macedonia.^c Philippi is celebrated as the battle-field where the Roman republic received its final death blow, when the armies of Brutus and Cassius were overthrown by those of Augustus and Antony. But it is still more celebrated as the first city in Europe where Paul preached the Gospel. Being not a commercial city, but a military

^a So called in honour of Alexander the Great. It was situated about four miles from the traditionary site of ancient Troy.

^b Troas is now in ruins, but these are extensive and magnificent, proving the importance that it once possessed. It is called Eski-Stamboul or old Constantinople.

^c Luke calls it "the chief city of that part of Macedonia," by which is probably meant that it was the first city of Macedonia proper at which Paul arrived. Its original name was Crenides, and it received the name Philippi from the father of Alexander, who conquered and rebuilt it.

colony, it contained few Jewish residents. There was no synagogue, but only a *proseucha* or place of prayer outside the city. To this Paul with his company repaired for worship, and there preached the Gospel. The result was the conversion of Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, and evidently a woman of influence and position. For several Sabbaths Paul continued quietly to preach, and a considerable church was formed, consisting both of Jews and of Gentiles. An event, however, occurred which terminated his visit to Philippi. A certain demoniac damsel was cured by him, and this enraged her masters, who had derived profit from her vaticinations. They accordingly stirred up the people, and Paul and Silas were dragged before the magistrates on the charge of introducing a new religion, which it was unlawful for Romans to observe. The magistrates, without examining into the case, commanded Paul and Silas to be scourged and thrown into prison. When in prison Paul and Silas sang hymns, and an earthquake shook the building. The jailor, supposing that his prisoners had escaped, and knowing that he would be punished with death if this were the case, was about to commit suicide, when Paul satisfied him by the assurance of their safety. The result was that the jailor and his household became converts to Christianity. Next morning the magistrates, either terrified by the earthquake, or conscious that they had proceeded too far, ordered the prisoners to be released. But Paul, in the interest of Christianity, demanded an apology, because, although protected by the privilege of Roman citizenship, they had been publicly scourged. ^a Paul and Silas, having thus vindicated their honour, in order to avoid further disturbance, departed from the city. They were accompanied by Timothy; but Luke was left behind to instruct and confirm the infant church.

^a Acts xvi. 37.

46. PAUL AT THESSALONICA (Acts xvii. 1-9).

Paul and his companions proceeded to Thessalonica, the capital of Macedonia, and the residence of the Roman proconsul. It received its name from the sister of Alexander the Great, the wife of Cassander King of Macedonia. Being a large commercial city, it was frequented by the Jews.^a The principal synagogue of the country was here, and to this Paul repaired and preached the Gospel. For three Sabbaths he reasoned with the Jews, showing them from their scriptures that the Messiah must suffer and rise from the dead, and from history that Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified by the Jews, did rise from the dead, and was consequently the Messiah. The result of these discourses was that a few of the Jews believed, but the success was greater among the proselytes and other devout Greeks who frequented the synagogue.^b After this Paul and his companions were expelled the synagogue, but the nucleus of a Gentile congregation was formed. From the Epistles to the Thessalonians it appears that Paul remained for a considerable time longer preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles, and that a flourishing church was formed, composed chiefly of Gentile converts. The Thessalonians received the Gospel not as the word of man, but as the word of God. It came to them in power and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; and the report of their conversion was spread throughout Macedonia and Achaia.^c Paul, during his residence at Thessalonica, supported himself by labouring at his trade of a tent-maker,^d assisted by pecuniary donations from the Christians in Philippi, who sent twice to his necessities.^e The Jews, filled with envy at the success of Paul and his companions, raised a tumult. They stirred up the rabble, and accused them to the magistrates of treason against

^a It is said that nearly one half of the modern city of Saloniki, the population of which is 70,000, are Jews.

^b Acts xvii. 4. ^c 1 Thes. i. 5, 8. ^d 1 Thes. ii. 9. ^e Phil. iv. 16.

Cæsar. In consequence of these commotions they felt compelled to depart.

47. PAUL AT BEREIA (Acts xvii. 10-14). From Thessalonica they proceeded to Berea. The Berean Jews were not so bigoted; they did not prejudge the case, but gave to Paul and Silas a fair and impartial hearing. They compared the proofs advanced by Paul with their scriptures; and the consequence was that there were numerous conversions among them. The Thessalonian Jews, however, followed in the footsteps of the preachers. They came to Berea and stirred up commotions similar to those in Thessalonica, in consequence of which Paul was constrained to depart, whilst Timothy and Silas remained behind.

48. PAUL AT ATHENS (Acts xvii. 15-34). Paul went by sea to Athens. Athens was certainly not what it once had been, but it was still the centre of Grecian civilization and culture. The city is described as full of idols. Statues of gods and goddesses, the masterpieces of Grecian art, were seen in every street; so numerous were they that it was a proverb that it was easier to find a god at Athens than a man. Among the numerous altars which adorned the city, there was one which caught the apostle's eye with the strange inscription, "To the unknown God;"^a in all probability erected in the time of pestilence or public calamity in honour of the unknown God, who was supposed to send deliverance. In Athens Paul was left alone.^b He had indeed sent an urgent request to Silas and Timothy to rejoin him, but they had been prevented doing so. Surrounded by such monuments of idolatry, he could not restrain himself. Not only did he preach in the synagogue every Sabbath, but like Socrates of old he disputed in the market-place daily. Here he encountered the disciples of the two great schools of

^a Or, "to an unknown god" as the Revised Version puts it.

^b 1 Thes. iii 1.

heathen philosophy—the Stoics, who may be said to have been the pantheists of the ancient world, and the Epicureans, who were its materialists. Opinions were divided about Paul. Some regarded him as a vain babbler, others as the introducer of strange divinities, probably mistaking the resurrection for a goddess. By these philosophers Paul was conducted to the Areopagus, the meeting place of the illustrious senate of Athens, before whom four centuries previously Socrates had been tried and condemned. It does not appear that any accusation was brought against the apostle; rather a polite request was made that he should explain the nature of this new religion which he taught. Paul, in response to this request, delivered his celebrated address to the Athenians—an address marked by a conciliatory spirit, wonderful tact, lofty views of God, and a recognition of the element of truth which lay at the bottom of the mistaken worship of the Athenians. He adverts to their religious character,^a and with the inscription on the altar as his text, tries to lead them to recognise in the unknown object of their ignorant worship the true God Himself.^b He tells them that the days of ignorance were now past, and that God had made a revelation of Himself in Christ Jesus, in confirmation of which He had raised Him from the dead. The result of this discourse was small; the philosophic pride of Athens was a greater obstacle to the reception of the Gospel than the sensuality of Corinth. We do not read of the formation of a church, and the success of the Gospel is summed up in these words: “Howbeit certain men clave unto him and believed, among whom was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.”^c

^a Acts xvii. 22: “Superstitious” is an unfortunate rendering. The word rather signifies “more God-fearing than others.” It is strange that *superstitious* is still retained in the revised edition.

^b Compare the Revised Version.

^c Acts xvii. 34.

49. PAUL AT CORINTH (Acts xviii. 1-17). A short journey brought Paul to Corinth. Here he found himself in an entirely different atmosphere. Athens was a university city, the great seat of learning; Corinth was a commercial town, celebrated for its luxury. The difference between these two cities is well seen in the nature of their tutelar divinities. Minerva, the goddess of wisdom, was the object of worship at Athens; whilst Venus, the goddess of love, was the patron of Corinth. No town in Europe was more favourably situated for commerce than Corinth. Built on the celebrated Isthmus which separated the Aegean from the Ionian sea, it commanded the commerce both of the East and of the West. Corinth had been completely destroyed by the Romans in B.C. 146; and after lying in ruins for a hundred years it was rebuilt by Julius Cæsar and converted into a Roman colony. Under the Romans it speedily recovered its former prosperity, and became the abode of riches, luxury, and refinement.^a Even among the pollutions of heathenism, Corinth had an infamous eminence in impurity; one historian calls it "the most licentious of all cities that are or have been." Into this wicked city the messenger of the cross made his way. He came unattended and alone. Fortunately he found there a certain Christian Jew named Aquila and his wife Priscilla, fugitives from Italy, and tent-makers like himself. With them he lodged and wrought; for, as at Thessalonica, he was obliged to gain his livelihood by manual labour. According to custom he repaired to the synagogue, and there reasoned with the Jews, proving that Jesus was the Messiah. The same result followed as in other cities; he was expelled from the synagogue and betook himself to the Gentiles. He was now joined by Silas and Timothy from Macedonia. A new impulse was imparted to him^b; encouraged by

^a Corinth is now a miserable village, still bearing its ancient name.

^b Acts xviii. 5.

a vision, he preached with greater earnestness. For a year and a half (A.D. 53, 54) Paul taught in the house of one Justus, and the result was that a large and flourishing church was formed. In this wicked and abandoned city Christ had much people. Among the Corinthian converts special mention is made of Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue ^a; Erastus, the chamberlain of the city; Gaius, the host of the apostle ^b; and Stephanas, the first fruits of Achaia. ^c About this time Gallio, the member of an illustrious family, ^d entered upon the duties of Roman proconsul. He is described as a man of a most amiable temper, of a refined and upright disposition, and beloved by all who knew him. The Jews, thinking to take advantage of his easy disposition, dragged Paul before the judgment seat. They, however, miscalculated. Gallio saw clearly that this was a matter not within his jurisdiction; that although the Jews were protected in the performance of their religion, yet it belonged to themselves to regulate their own affairs. He therefore declined to interfere, and drove the accusers of Paul from the judgment seat. Thus, at Corinth, the apostle, in the preaching of the Gospel, was even protected by the Roman government.

50. THE EPISTLES TO THE THESSALONIANS. It was during this lengthened residence at Corinth that Paul wrote the two Epistles to the Thessalonians. When Timothy joined him at Corinth he brought information concerning the church of Thessalonica. The persecution, begun when the apostle was there, was continued; the church was defective both in knowledge and in practice; and the disciples were distressed about the fate of their deceased friends, fearing that they should not participate in the blessings of the advent. Paul had left Thessalonica before the disciples were sufficiently

^a Acts xviii. 8.

^b Rom. xvi. 23; 1 Cor. i. 14.

^c 1 Cor. xvi. 15.

^d The brother of Seneca and the uncle of Lucan.

confirmed in the faith ; and he had been prevented from re-visiting them. Accordingly he wrote an epistle to them, to encourage them amidst their trials, to confirm them in the faith, and to comfort them under the loss of their deceased friends. The messenger who carried this Epistle returned with the information that a fanatical spirit had arisen in the Thessalonian church. The idea of the immediate advent of Christ had taken a strong hold on their minds ; and in consequence of this the church had fallen into a state of disorder ; many were in such a state of excitement that they neglected the duties of their worldly calling.^a To correct this prevailing error concerning the advent of Christ, the apostle wrote the second Epistle ; and along with this correction of error he sought the removal of the abuses to which it gave rise.

51. PAUL'S VOW (Acts xviii. 10). After a residence of eighteen months at Corinth, Paul, Silas, and Timothy,^b accompanied by Aquila and Priscilla, departed. They came to Cenchrea, the eastern harbour of Corinth, with the design of sailing for Ephesus. Here a church had already been planted, either by Paul or by one of his associates.^c It was at Cenchrea that Paul went through the ceremony of shaving his head in connection with a vow which he had taken. Although Paul was the apostle of liberty, and asserted the freedom of the Gentiles from the Jewish law, yet he himself did not renounce Judaism, but frequently practised many of its ceremonies. Paul accordingly shaved his head in conformity with the customs of the Jews, who frequently took a vow resembling that of the Nazarites, allowing their hair to grow for a certain time, and after the lapse of that period going through the ceremony of shaving it. We are not informed what was the

^a 2 Thes. ii. 1-3.

^b It is possible that Timothy and Silas may have been left behind at Corinth to confirm the church there.

^c Rom. xvi. 1.

nature of the apostle's vow ; but probably it was an expression of gratitude for his deliverance from the machinations of the Jews by the interposition of Gallio.

52. PAUL'S FOURTH VISIT TO JERUSALEM (Acts xviii. 19-22). From Cenchrea Paul and his companions sailed direct to Ephesus. Here, however, at this time his stay was short. He went to the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. On this occasion he met with a favourable reception. The Jews entreated him to tarry longer with them. Paul, however, being anxious to reach Jerusalem in time to attend one of the great annual festivals did not consent, but promised soon to return. From Ephesus he accordingly sailed to Cæsarea, and from Cæsarea he went up to Jerusalem. This was the apostle's fourth visit to that city after his conversion. It is only alluded to in this passage ; probably his stay was short and unimportant. Here Silas remained ; and Paul, along with Timothy, returned to Antioch, the city from which he had set out on this journey. Thus terminated Paul's second missionary journey. He had penetrated into new countries and established churches in the great cities of the Roman empire. Besides visiting the churches formerly planted in Cilicia and Pisidia, he had preached the Gospel in Phrygia and Galatia, crossed over to Europe and planted Christianity in at least four cities—Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, and Corinth ; perhaps also in Athens. The space traversed was much more extensive than that of his former missionary journey ; and the time occupied would be about three years (A.D. 52-54), one half of which was spent in Corinth.

QUESTIONS AND POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

1. *Give an account of Silas.*
2. *Give an account of Timothy.*

3. Describe the introduction of Christianity into Galatia.

4. Combine the accounts in the Acts and in the Epistles to the Thessalonians of Paul's preaching in Thessalonica.

5. Describe the opinions of the Stoics and Epicureans.

6. Point out the qualities of Paul's address to the Athenians.

7. Give instances of Paul's observance of the Jewish law.

CHAPTER V.

PAUL'S THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY.

53. COMMENCEMENT OF THE THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY (Acts xviii. 23). Paul's residence at Antioch, on this occasion, must have been short. He felt impelled to preach the Gospel in other quarters, and accordingly, about Pentecost A.D. 54, he departed on his third missionary journey. We are not informed who his comrades were. Mention is made of various companions in travel who were with him at Ephesus, and the names of seven are given who accompanied him from Macedonia into Asia.^a Two deserve special mention—Timothy and Titus. Timothy, in all probability, accompanied the apostle from the commencement, and thus supplied the place of Silas. Titus, though not mentioned in the Acts, had on a former occasion gone up with the apostle to Jerusalem,^b and was with him at Ephesus.^c He was useful to him for the ministry, and was sent on two occasions on delicate missions to Corinth. The third journey commenced like the second as a journey of visitation to churches already planted.

^a Acts xix. 22, 29; xx. 4.

^b Gal. ii. 1.

^c 2 Cor. xii. 18.

The exact route is not indicated, but in all probability it was similar to that formerly taken. Paul would sail from Seleucia, the port of Antioch, to Tarsus, his native city, and would then journey through the Cilician gates to Lycaonia, and from that northward to Galatia. This was his second visit to the churches of Galatia, and the reception which he received was not so cordial as on his former visit. Then they received him as an angel of God ; but now there was a partial cooling of their affection. Certain Judaistic teachers had tampered with their faith ; the seeds of the serious defection which afterwards occurred had been sown ; the warmth of their first love had declined ; and the apostle felt constrained to address them in words of warning and reproof.^a

54. PAUL'S THREE YEARS' RESIDENCE AT EPHESUS (Acts xix. 1-20). The apostle, having visited the churches of Galatia, redeemed the promise made on his former journey by coming to Ephesus. This celebrated city was the capital of Proconsular Asia, and, as such, the residence of the Roman proconsul. It was reputed to be the metropolis of 500 cities. Now a miserable village, known by the name of Ayasaluch, it was in the time of Paul in the full meridian of its glory. It was especially celebrated for the worship of Diana. The temple of Ephesus was to the Asiatics what the temple of Jerusalem was to the Jews. Regarded as one of the seven wonders of the world, it was unsurpassed for the magnificence of its pillars, and the splendid sculptures with which it was adorned. The image of Diana itself was not one of the masterpieces of Grecian art, but the rude figure of a female with many breasts, supposed to represent the fruitful attributes of nature. The theatre of Ephesus, where the riot occurred, was one of the largest in the world, and is said to have been capable of containing 50,000 spectators.^b Paul, when he came

^a Gal. v. 21.

^b It was, like all the Oriental theatres, open to the sky.

to Ephesus, would probably stay as at Corinth with Aquila and Priscilla; for we learn that here also he had to support himself and his friends by manual labour.^a For the space of nearly three years,^b his longest residence in any city, he continued preaching the Gospel; at first in the synagogue of the Jews, and afterwards on his expulsion in the lecture room of a Greek sophist (or, rhetorician) named Tyrannus.^c Probably in no city were the labours of Paul more blessed; the word of God grew mightily and prevailed; and he himself tells us that "a great and effectual door was opened"^d to him. At Ephesus Paul was in the very centre of superstition. Like Moses in Egypt he was surrounded with magicians and exorcists; and like Moses he was endowed with special powers to oppose them. God wrought miracles by the hands of Paul; even to handkerchiefs and aprons taken from his body a healing virtue was imparted. As Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so certain Jewish exorcists, the sons of one Sceva, probably the ruler of the synagogue, withstood Paul, but it resulted in their discomfiture. Thus the Lord Jesus, in whose name Paul's miracles were performed, was magnified. All this had a beneficial effect upon the disciples. They renounced their superstition, and burned their magical books to the value of £1800.

55. DIFFUSION OF THE GOSPEL THROUGHOUT PROCONSULAR ASIA. When at Ephesus, Paul may have made circuits to other cities, so that the Gospel was diffused throughout Proconsular Asia.^e Besides, Ephesus was the centre of a large district; multitudes flocked to it, partly for the purpose of commerce, and partly as pilgrims to the temple of Diana. Paul's fame must have spread throughout the city. He taught daily in the lecture room of Tyrannus without molestation; and thus multitudes

^a Acts xx. 34.

^b Acts xx. 31.

^c Some however, hold Tyrannus to have been a *Jewish* teacher, and his "school" a private synagogue.—*Editor*.

^d 1 Cor xvi. 9.

^e Acts xix. 10.

from the neighbouring cities would hear the word of God. He had also numerous fellow-workers. We learn that Timothy, Titus, Apollos, Aquila, Erastus, Epaphras, Gaius, and Aristarchus were with him, and these would be sent by him to preach the Gospel in other parts of the province. Perhaps it was now that the foundation of the seven churches in Asia was laid ; and it was at this time that the churches in the neighbouring cities of Colosse, Hierapolis, and Laodicea were founded by Epaphras, one of Paul's associates.^a So successful was the ministry of Paul at Ephesus and throughout Proconsular Asia, that there was a sensible diminution in the sale of the silver shrines of Diana ; so that Demetrius and the craftsmen complained that not alone at Ephesus, but throughout all Asia, this Paul persuadeth and turneth away much people, saying that they are no gods which are made with hands.

56. THE TUMULT AT EPHEBUS (Acts xix. 21 - 41). After Paul had continued for two years and three months at Ephesus, he made preparations for his departure. His purpose was to revisit the churches in Macedonia and Achaia, then to proceed to Jerusalem, and from that to Rome. Before, however, these intentions could be carried out, a great tumult occurred in Ephesus. By the preaching of the apostle, the lucrative trade of those who made silver shrines of Diana^b was injured ; and men are enraged at anything which lessens their gains. This was the more sensibly felt, as it was the time of the celebration of the Artemisia or the games in honour of Diana,^c when there was usually a greater demand for these silver shrines. Accordingly, a certain Demetrius, a silversmith, assembled the workmen who derived their subsistence from trades connected with

^a Col. iv. 12, 13.

^b Small models of the temple of Diana, containing an image of the goddess.

^c These occurred in the month of May ; and Paul waited in Ephesus until Pentecost, which occurred in May.

the worship of Diana, and so wrought upon their passions that the whole city was in an uproar. They rushed to the house of Aquila where Paul lodged; but Aquila and Priscilla, at the peril of their own lives, sheltered the apostle.^a They then seized upon two of Paul's companions, Gaius and Aristarchus, and flocked to the theatre. Here a scene of indescribable confusion occurred. The air was rent with shouts, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians," and the greater part of the crowd knew not what was the occasion of the tumult. Paul himself wished to venture among the multitude; but the Asiarchs,^b whose office it was to provide the public games in honour of Diana and pay the expense of them, although not converts to Christianity, being filled with respect for Paul, befriended him and would not suffer him to endanger his life. At length the tumult wore itself out, and the multitude became open to reason. The town-clerk, who kept the archives of the city, a person of great importance in the Greek free cities, addressed them. By representing the danger which they incurred of drawing down upon themselves the wrath of the Roman government, and by a little seasonable flattery, he managed to dismiss the assembly. Certainly it was a period of great danger to the apostle, and had it not been for the interposition of those high in authority in the city, and for the devotion of his friends, he would have perished in the tumult. It may be with reference to this danger that he writes to the Corinthians that he fought with beasts at Ephesus.

57. THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS. It was during this long residence at Ephesus that Paul wrote the Epistle to the Galatians. We have seen that, during his second visit to Galatia, he discerned unfavourable symptoms which he had attempted to correct. He now learned to his great

^a Rom. xvi. 3, 4.

^b So ought the "chief of Asia" to be translated.

grief and consternation that his Galatian converts had suddenly forsaken his teaching and embraced that of his Judaistic opponents. Preachers of strict Jewish notions, like those who formerly came to Antioch, had arrived in Galatia, and inculcated the necessity of circumcision and the observance of the Jewish law for salvation. They also undermined the authority of the apostle, affirming that he was inferior to the Jewish apostles. The fickle Galatians, who formerly had embraced the Gospel with such joy, were persuaded by them; they relinquished the liberty which they had in Christ Jesus, and adopted the views of the Judaistic teachers.^a To counteract these errors, and to bring them back to the simple faith of the Gospel, was the object of this Epistle. Paul felt himself obliged to vindicate his apostolic authority and to assert his equality with the twelve. He draws a broad line of distinction between the law and the Gospel, proclaims the great doctrine of justification by faith, and asserts and maintains the liberty of the Gentiles from Jewish ordinances.

58. STATE OF THE CHURCH OF CORINTH: FIRST EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS. Whilst Paul was at Ephesus, news of a vexing character arrived concerning the church of Corinth. He had left that church apparently in a flourishing condition. But grievous disorders had now sprung up in it. Information was brought to him at Ephesus by certain members of the household of Chloe, of the factions into which the church was divided, of the immoralities committed, and especially of an offence of a peculiarly aggravated nature which had not been repudiated.^b Paul was eagerly desirous of repairing at once to Corinth, but he saw that the church was not in a proper state to receive him, and that his visit would certainly be painful and possibly hurtful. He therefore deferred the visit which he intended; and instead of sailing direct

^a Gal. iii. 1; i. 6, 7.

^b 1 Cor. i. 11.

from Ephesus to Corinth, he resolved to go to Macedonia, and after visiting the cities in that country, to repair to Corinth. Meanwhile he wrote what is our First Epistle to the Corinthians. He had already sent Timothy and Erastus before him to Macedonia and Achaia, to prepare his way and to correct the abuses of the Corinthian church.^a But the affair was urgent, and accordingly Paul despatched Titus with this Epistle,^b sending along with him also another fellow-labourer whose name is not given.^c This Epistle, as he himself tells us, he wrote with many tears out of much affliction and anguish of heart.^d Nothing must have pained Paul's sensitive nature more than the defection of those churches of which he was the founder. It was not merely his own heart that was wounded, it was the cause of Christ that was injured. With intensest feeling he deals with the unhappy spirit of faction that had taken hold of the Church, as well as with the painful indications of lax views both of morals and of doctrine. He rebukes the Church for its tolerance of open sin, for its abuse of the Lord's Supper, for the ambitious and contentious disposition exhibited by its members. He met and answered difficulties which had been started about celibacy, the lawfulness of eating meats offered to idols, the exercise of spiritual gifts, and other matters. In bursts of noblest eloquence he expounded the pre-eminence of love, and defended the central doctrine of the Resurrection, which had been called in question.

59. PAUL'S DEPARTURE FROM EPHEBUS (Acts xx. 1-3). Paul remained in Ephesus until Pentecost A.D. 57, exactly a year before his arrival at Jerusalem, and then set out on his journey to Macedonia. Here the record of the Acts fails us; the labours of nine months,^e perhaps the most active in Paul's life, are summed up in these few words: "He

^a Acts xix. 22; 1 Cor. iv. 17.

^b The First Epistle to the Corinthians.

^c 2 Cor. xii. 18.

^d 2 Cor. ii. 4.

^e From June 57 to March 58.

departed to go to Macedonia. And when he had gone over those parts, and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece, and there abode three months." Happily we can supply in some measure the deficiency from the Epistles. Paul sailed from Ephesus to Alexandria Troas.^a He had been in this city on his former journey, but had merely passed through it. Now he remained and preached the Gospel; a door was opened for him by the Lord, and a church was formed which he revisited on his return from Greece. Here he was in great anxiety about tidings from Corinth. He had expected Titus, but in this he was disappointed, and, unable to endure longer suspense, he crossed over to Macedonia, and came to Philippi, where he was comforted by the arrival of Titus.^b Six years had elapsed since he had preached the Gospel at Philippi, and was scourged in the market-place. No church had given him more proofs of their affection and greater reasons for thankfulness to God; and to no church was he more attached. It was at this time that Paul extended his preaching through the whole province of Macedonia. He had already visited the three first districts, and now he visited the fourth, or Macedonia Quarta; so that writing a few months afterwards to the Romans he could say: "From Jerusalem and round about unto Illyricum I have fully preached the Gospel of Christ."

60. THE SECOND EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS. It was during this residence in Macedonia, and probably from Philippi, that Paul wrote the Second Epistle to the Corinthians. Titus had joined the apostle in Macedonia. The information which he brought was of a mixed nature, and not wholly satisfactory. Titus, indeed, had been well received by the Corinthians; the great body of the church had returned to their allegiance; the incestuous person had not only been excommunicated but

^a 2 Cor ii 12.

^b 2 Cor. vii. 5, 6.

brought to repentance; the collection for the saints at Jerusalem had been commenced and was in a state of forwardness; and the Corinthians had expressed a strong desire for a visit from the apostle. There was, however, an active and troublesome minority—a party still opposed to the apostle, and, so far from being subdued, more embittered against him. It would also seem that Judaistic teachers, those relentless opponents of the apostle, had come with letters of commendation to Corinth, so that the church was still torn by factions. The apostle felt himself constrained to write a second Epistle. This Epistle varies greatly in tone. In one part, addressed to the obedient portion of the church, it is affectionate and commendatory; in another part, addressed to his opponents, it is apologetic and severe. Titus, who had so well managed the former mission, was sent back to Corinth with this Epistle accompanied by two brethren, one of whom there is reason to suppose was Luke, the author of the Acts.^a Luke had been left behind by Paul on his former journey, and must now have rejoined him. But it is not until the apostle's return from Corinth that the narrative assumes the direct form. Hence it is reasonable to suppose that Luke was not with the apostle during his visitation of the Macedonian churches, but was sent in company with Titus to Corinth.

61. PAUL'S SECOND VISIT TO CORINTH (Acts xx. 2, 3). After spending six months in Macedonia, re-visiting Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea, and preaching the Gospel in Macedonia Quarta, Paul came at length to Corinth. Here he spent three months and fulfilled his promise of wintering there. We have no account either of the nature of his reception, or of the effect which his visit had upon the Corinthians. But we may indulge the hope, supported by some expressions in an Epistle to the

^a 2 Cor. viii. 16-18.

Corinthians written by Clemens, one of Paul's associates, that the disorders of the church were remedied, though traces of the factious spirit still remained.

62. THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS. It was during this winter residence in Corinth that Paul wrote the Epistle to the Romans. The reason of his writing the church of Rome—a church which he had not himself founded nor even visited—was doubtless the importance belonging to that church as one established in the metropolis of the world. It was, therefore, his earnest desire that the Roman Christians should be well founded in the faith and protected from the errors of heretical teachers. Paul had long entertained the desire of visiting Rome, and his present intention was to proceed at once to that city after his visit to Jerusalem.^a Meantime he seized the opportunity which presented itself of sending them an epistle. Phœbe, a deaconness of the church of Cenchrea, the eastern port of Corinth, was about to visit Rome, and to her charge Paul committed this important Epistle.^b

63. PAUL'S RETURN TO PHILIPPI (Acts xx. 3, 4). Throughout the churches of Macedonia and Achaia, Paul had been engaged in making collections for the saints at Jerusalem, and the contributions having been finished, he resolved, along with the delegates of the churches, to go up to Jerusalem to the feast of Pentecost. His intention was to sail direct from Corinth either to Ephesus or to Antioch, but he was prevented from doing so by a conspiracy of the Jews. He accordingly journeyed overland to Philippi, where he arrived about the Passover of the year 58. Here he was joined by a noble band of associates, composed partly of the messengers of the churches who were carrying their contributions to Jerusalem, and partly of his assistants in the ministry. Among these mention is made of Sopater, or Sosipater, of

^a Acts xix. 21; Rom. i. 7.

^b Rom. xvi. 1.

Berea, whom Paul calls his kinsman ^a; of Aristarchus, of Thessalonica, who shared the apostle's danger at Ephesus, and afterwards accompanied him to Rome ^b; of Secundus, another member of the church of Thessalonica; of Gaius, a native of Derbe in Lycaonia; of Timothy, Paul's favourite disciple; of Tychicus, afterwards the bearer of the Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians; and of Trophimus, the innocent occasion of Paul's imprisonment.^c Luke himself was one of them, as the narrative now assumes a direct form.

64. PAUL AT ALEXANDRIA TROAS (Acts xx. 5-12). From the pen of Luke we have a minute account of Paul's journey from Philippi to Jerusalem. We can even trace day by day the fifty days which intervened between the Passover and Pentecost, and which were occupied in this journey.^d Paul's companions went before to Troas, whilst he and Luke tarried at Philippi until after the feast of the Passover. He then sailed from Neapolis, the port of Philippi, to Troas, where he arrived in five days. In Troas he remained a week preaching the Gospel, and confirming the disciples. We have an account of the first Sabbath service. On the first day of the week Paul and his disciples met in a large upper room. The service consisted in prayer, in preaching the word, in the celebration of the Lord's Supper, and in partaking of the *agāpe* or love feast. Whilst Paul was long

	^a Rom. xvi. 21.	^b Acts xix. 29; xxvii. 2.	^c Acts xxi. 29.
^d Paul left Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, that is after the Passover,			6 days.
And came to Troas in			5 "
Where he abode			7 "
Voyage from Troas to Miletus			4 "
At Miletus			2 "
Miletus to Patara			4 "
Patara to Tyre			4 "
At Tyre			7 "
Tyre to Ptolemais			1 day.
Ptolemais to Cæsarea			2 days.
At Cæsarea			5 or 6 "
Cæsarea to Jerusalem			2 "

preaching, a young man named Eutychus sank into a deep sleep, fell through a lattice window into the court below, and was taken up dead. Paul, however, restored him to life. Thus, at once by the miracle performed and by the preaching of the Gospel, the disciples were comforted and confirmed in the faith.

65. PAUL AT MILETUS (Acts xx. 13-38.) Next day Paul and his company proceeded on their journey. Whilst his companions sailed round the promontory of Lectum to Assos,^a a seaport of Proconsular Asia, he himself went on foot. The distance by land from Troas to Assos is about twenty miles, whilst by sea it is more than forty. Probably Paul wished time for private meditation and prayer, as it had been indicated to him that the journey on which he had entered was one of peril. From Assos Paul and his company sailed to Mitylene, the capital of the island of Lesbos, and the next day to Chios, the modern Scio. The following day they arrived at Samos, a populous island off the coast of Lydia, and separated from it by a narrow channel. From that they crossed over to Trogyllium on the mainland, and the next day the vessel arrived at Miletus, the ancient capital of Ionia.^b Paul in thus coasting along the shores of Asia had sailed past Ephesus.^c As he was anxious to be at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, and much time was already spent, he could not visit that city. Yet he would not be in its immediate neighbourhood without seeing at least the office-bearers of the church. As the vessel had to remain a few days at Miletus, he embraced the opportunity of sending to Ephesus and inviting the elders of the church to meet him. The distance was thirty miles, so that Paul must have remained at Miletus from three to four days. When

^a There are extensive ruins at Assos; the most singular of these remains is the "Street of Tombs," stretching for miles.

^b The site of Miletus is now a swamp, and there are few remains of the once proud capital of Ionia.

^c He had already sailed past Ephesus, when he came to Samos.

the elders were assembled, Paul delivered to them his celebrated farewell address. He reminds them of the past; how for three years he had preached the Gospel to them amid difficulty and persecution, reasoning both with Jews and Greeks. He expresses his forebodings for the future: that for himself he was on a journey to Jerusalem, which he well knew was full of danger, and that in all probability he was addressing them for the last time. From his experience of what had occurred in the churches of Galatia and Corinth, he affectionately and earnestly warns the Ephesian elders of those heretical teachers who, like grievous wolves, might enter in among them, not sparing the flock. And he concludes his address by solemnly commending them to God who was able to keep them from falling, to edify and confirm them in the faith, and to bestow upon them the reward of faithful service.

66. COURSE OF THE VOYAGE (Acts xxi. 1-14).

It was probably at Miletus that most of Paul's companions left him, as they accompanied him only into Asia. ^a Those who now journeyed with Paul to Jerusalem were only Luke, Trophimus and Aristarchus. ^b From Miletus Paul and his company sailed to the island of Coos, now Stancho, about forty miles to the south, and next day to the famous island of Rhodes, and thence to Patara, the port of Xanthus, the capital of Lycia, from which it was ten miles distant. At Patara they quitted the ship in which they had sailed from Troas, and which appears to have been a coasting vessel, and embarked on board one which sailed direct in open sea to the famous seaport of Tyre, at which they would arrive in four days. There were disciples at Tyre, a church having been planted many years before by the preachers of the dispersion. ^c With them Paul rested seven days. Here also he was warned of the danger which awaited him in Jerusalem. From Tyre Paul and

^a Acts xx. 4.

^b Acts xxi. 29; xxvii. 2.

^c Acts xi. 19.

his company sailed to Ptolemais, the ancient Accho, now the modern St Jean d'Acre. Here the voyage of the apostle ended : the remainder of the journey was by land. The next day after their arrival at Ptolemais Paul proceeded to Cæsarea, a distance of thirty miles. In this city there were numerous Christians. Here the Gospel had been first preached to the Gentiles when Cornelius was converted, and here Philip the evangelist, one of the seven deacons, resided. Paul spent in this friendly society the days which still remained before Pentecost—the only days of rest and liberty which he was for a long time to enjoy. It was the pause before the storm. Agabus, who had formerly predicted the famine which occurred in the days of Claudius, came from Judea to warn Paul of the danger he was incurring in going up to Jerusalem ; and all the Christians in Cæsarea, as well as Paul's companions in travel, besought him not to venture himself. But nothing could daunt his indomitable spirit. He felt that it was his duty to go up to Jerusalem, and he refused to permit any dangers or difficulties to alter his determination. He was on the path of duty, and that was sufficient ; he was ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.

67. PAUL'S ARRIVAL AT JERUSALEM (Acts xxi. 15, 16). The day of Pentecost drew near ; only three days intervened, and a distance of sixty miles had to be traversed. Paul therefore, like his Lord, set his face stedfastly to go up to Jerusalem. He was accompanied by several disciples of Cæsarea, who also were going up to worship at the feast, and along with Luke, Trophimus, and Aristarchus he entered Jerusalem. This was his fifth and last visit to that city since his conversion, and he must have been filled with sad forebodings. He was bringing with him the contributions of the Gentiles to the Jewish Christians ; but he well knew that nothing that he could do would remove the prejudices which

they had formed against him. And whilst the Jewish Christians regarded him with suspicion, the unbelieving Jews looked upon him with hatred as the enemy of their religion. Besides, in every city which he had visited he had been warned that bonds and afflictions awaited him ; and recently at Tyre and Cæsarea he had been affectionately admonished of his danger. Thus terminated Paul's third missionary journey. It embraced the provinces of Galatia, Proconsular Asia, Macedonia, and Achaia. Ephesus was his head-quarters, from which as a centre the Gospel was diffused among the populous cities of Asia. The time occupied would be four years, from Pentecost A.D. 54 to Pentecost A.D. 58. Nearly three of these years were spent in Ephesus, six months in Macedonia, and three months in Corinth.

QUESTIONS AND POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

1. *Give a list (with references) of Paul's companions during his third missionary journey.*
 2. *Give an account of Titus.*
 3. *Mention the incidents which occurred during Paul's residence at Ephesus.*
 4. *State the occasion of the Epistle to the Galatians.*
 5. *Give an account of the disorders in the Corinthian Church.*
 6. *Trace Paul's missionary labours during the nine months subsequent to his departure from Ephesus.*
 7. *Trace Paul's journey from Philippi to Jerusalem.*
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CHAPTER VI.

PAUL'S IMPRISONMENT.

68. PAUL'S RECEPTION AT JERUSALEM (Acts xxi. 18-26). Paul having arrived at Jerusalem was welcomed by those disciples who sympathised with his views.^a The next day he and the deputies of the Gentile church met James^b and the elders of the church of Jerusalem in a formal assembly. Paul and the deputies delivered over the collections which had been made by the churches of Macedonia and Achaia ; and recounted the wonderful success which God had imparted to the Gospel among the Gentiles. James and the elders represented to Paul the great danger he was incurring at Jerusalem ; that not only was he the object of hatred to the unbelieving Jews, but also that the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem were in general prejudiced against him. They looked with jealousy on the free admission of the Gentiles into the Christian church, and were suspicious that Paul taught the Jewish Christians apostasy from the law of Moses. The religion of these Jewish Christians was not pure Christianity, but a mixture of Judaism and Christianity. In the next century they separated themselves from the Christian church. They are known in ecclesiastical history as Ebionites and Nazarenes. To disarm these suspicions, James and the elders advised Paul to take part in the religious services of four Nazarites, and to defray the expenses attending their purification, thus giving a sensible proof that, so far from teaching apostasy from the law, he himself observed it. By this it was not meant that Paul should, like these men, take upon himself the vow of a Nazarite, but that he should join in their religious observances and pay for the offerings

^a Acts xxi. 17.

^b James, who occupied the position of the head of the church of Jerusalem, is the same who is elsewhere called "the Lord's brother."

required by the law,—an action which was regarded as highly meritorious by the Jews. To this proposal Paul could with a safe conscience consent. He had ever acted upon the principle of becoming a Jew to the Jews that he might gain the Jews^a; and although he insisted on the absolute liberty of the Gentiles, yet he himself had not renounced Jewish observances. He had circumcised Timothy, and gone through the religious ceremony of shaving his head at Cenchrea. At the same time his observance of the Mosaic law could not be very strict, and he must have been convinced that in assenting to the proposal of James he gave no countenance to the erroneous notion of the Judaistic teachers that salvation was by the works of the law.

69. PAUL'S ARREST IN THE TEMPLE (Acts xxi. 27-40). For seven days Paul had to repair to the temple with these four Nazarites, and to go through certain religious ceremonies. In the midst of these days, on the fifth day, certain Asiatic Jews, to whom he was well known and by whom he was bitterly hated, recognised him in the temple, and called on others to help in arresting him as the great enemy of their religion, and one who, as they asserted, had profaned the temple by bringing Greeks into it. They had seen Paul, probably in the court of the Gentiles, with Trophimus, one of the delegates of the churches,^b and who, being an Ephesian, was known to the Asiatic Jews; and they inferred that he had brought him into the inner court, into which no Gentile could enter on pain of death. In consequence, there was a great uproar; the Jews dragged Paul out of the inner court and shut the doors^c which led to the outer court, because they would not profane the sacred place by the shedding of his blood. Paul would certainly have been killed had it not been for the

^a 1 Cor ix. 20; vii. 18-20.

^b Acts xx. 4.

^c The beautiful gate of the temple led from the inner to the outer court.

opportune interference of the Roman soldiers. There was always a considerable body of soldiers quartered at Fort Antonia, which overlooked the temple, to guard against disturbances. Seeing the riot, Lysias, the Roman commander, came down and rescued Paul. The disturbance was so great that it was with difficulty that Paul could be conveyed to the Fort. Lysias supposed from the greatness of the uproar that he might be that Egyptian impostor whose forces were lately defeated by Felix, but who had himself escaped; and when Paul requested in the Greek language permission to address the multitude, he expressed surprise, and asked who he was. Paul replied that he was not the Egyptian, but a Jew of Tarsus.

70. PAUL'S DEFENCE BEFORE THE JEWS (Acts xxii. 1-29). Permission being granted to address the people, Paul delivered his celebrated defence before the Jews. He adapts his defence to his hearers in order to propitiate their favour and secure their attention. He addresses them in the Hebrew tongue; he mentions that although a Hellenist he had been educated in Jerusalem under Gamaliel, the most renowned of their rabbis; that like themselves he had been zealous for Judaism and furious against the Christians; and that he had been employed by the high priest under a commission to persecute the disciples of the Lord. He then recounts the wonderful story of his conversion, but he does so in a way to conciliate the Jews. He tells them that Ananias, who administered the initiatory rite of baptism, was a devout man according to the law, and well reported of by all the Jewish residents in Damascus. He mentions that even after his conversion he did not neglect the rites of Judaism, but that it was while he was worshipping in the temple that a vision was imparted to him. He dwells upon his ardent love for his countrymen. He speaks of his unwillingness to leave Jerusalem, and relinquish his attempts at their conversion. He explains that he

only departed in consequence of the repeated command of Christ, who said to him, Depart, for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles. Hitherto the Jews had listened with patience. By his eloquence and tact Paul had calmed the storm. But whenever he uttered the word Gentiles, their wounded pride was hurt, and the storm broke out afresh. They expressed their indignation by violent gestures and outcries. Paul himself, however, being protected by the Roman soldiers, was beyond the reach of personal violence. Lysias, who, being ignorant of Hebrew, did not understand the address, was perplexed. In order to find out the truth, he commanded Paul to be examined by scourging. But as they were binding him to the whipping-post, Paul appealed to his privilege of Roman citizenship, and the appeal had its instant effect, Lysias, indeed, having already offended by binding a Roman citizen with a view to scourging.

71. PAUL BEFORE THE SANHEDRIN (Acts xxii. 30—xxiii. 10). In order to find out the reason of all this uproar, Lysias resolved to bring Paul before the Sanhedrin.^a Guarded by an escort of Roman soldiers, Paul was brought into the council chamber. He commenced his address by affirming that unto the present hour he had always performed the duties of a loyal subject. Here he was interrupted by the high priest, Ananias, the son of Nebedæus (a man who played an important part in Jewish history), who commanded him to be smitten. Paul, filled with moral indignation, and perhaps feeling some natural irritation, replied, "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall: for sittest thou to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law?" a denunciation which received a remarkable fulfilment in the miserable death of Ananias at the commencement of the Jewish war.

^aThe Sanhedrin formerly met within the temple, in a room called the Hall of Gazzith; but the place of meeting was transferred to a chamber in the immediate neighbourhood, in order to be more under the control of the Romans.

When, however, he was reminded that he whom he thus reviled was the high priest, he instantly apologised, remarking that when he uttered these words he did not recollect or fully consider that it was the high priest whom he was addressing. Seeing that all further explanation was useless, Paul then addressed himself to the more favourable part of the audience. He asserted that the hope of a Messiah and the belief in a resurrection of the dead were the two points which lay at the foundation of his teaching; that in both he agreed with the Pharisees, and that like the Pharisees he was opposed to the Sadducees. This declaration created a diversion in his favour. The Sanhedrin was converted from a deliberative council into a tumultuous assembly; and Lysias, fearing that Paul might be actually torn in pieces by them, came and rescued him.

72. PAUL SENT PRISONER TO CÆSAREA (Acts xxiii. 11-35). This diversion in favour of Paul was only temporary: it was the mere impulse of the moment. The Pharisees were soon at one again with the Sadducees in bitter hatred of the apostle. Certain Jewish fanatics, who considered it their duty to slay all apostates from the law of Moses, bound themselves with an oath to kill Paul. Their design was that Paul should be again called before the Sanhedrin, and that they would murder him on his way thither. Their conspiracy, however, was discovered by Paul's nephew, who found means to inform the Roman commander. As Paul was a Roman citizen under his protection, Lysias took immediate measures for his safety, and resolved to send him under a strong escort to Cæsarea, the residence of Antonius Felix, the procurator. The escort sent amounted to 470 soldiers. This may appear a very extravagant number for the protection of one man. But we must remember that Judea was at this time infested with the Sicarii, who felt it to be their mission to slay all those whom they esteemed to be the

enemies of the law, and that the violence of the commotion raised against Paul, both by the rabble and by the Jewish rulers, proved that he was the special object of their animosity. Besides, there was a large body of Roman soldiers in Jerusalem, and it was a principle in military tactics to keep them in constant action. Paul and his escort made a forced march to Antipatris, a distance of forty miles. Here the greater part of the escort left, and returned to Jerusalem. The next day Paul, with the horsemen, proceeded to Cæsarea.

73. PAUL BEFORE FELIX (Acts xxiv. 1-26). Antonius Felix, before whom Paul now appeared, was the worst governor that Judea had as yet had. He was appointed to the office through the influence of his brother Pallas, then high in favour in the court of Claudius. His character and government are thus described by the Roman historian, Tacitus: "He exercised the authority of a king with the spirit of a slave." He indeed rendered some good service by putting down the banditti; but he was cruel, tyrannical, and avaricious; and did not scruple to employ the Sicarii to murder the high priest Jonathan, who had excited his displeasure by advising him to be more moderate in his government. Before this governor Paul was now brought. Ananias the high priest, and the chief of the Jews, accompanied by a hired advocate, Tertullus, appeared as his accusers. Tertullus delivered an artful oration, calculated to gain the goodwill of the governor, and to prejudice him against his prisoner. Three charges were brought against Paul: that he had created disturbances throughout the empire, and was thus guilty of treason against Cæsar; that he was a ring-leader of the sect of the Nazarenes, and disturbed the Jews in that exercise of their religion which was guaranteed by the state; and that he had attempted to profane the temple. Paul, in reply, takes up the charges brought against

him, and refutes them in succession. He was no mover of sedition among the Jews; neither in the temple, nor in the city, was he found disputing with any man or raising up a popular tumult. He did, indeed, belong to the so-called sect of the Nazarenes, but by doing so, far from renouncing the Jewish religion, he was a worshipper of the God of the Jews, and only carried out the principles of Judaism to their true conclusion. So far, too, from profaning the temple, his very presence there, he argued, was to honour it, and he came up to Jerusalem for the express purpose of bringing to his nation alms and offerings. Felix knew more about Christianity than Paul's adversaries imagined, and therefore, under the pretext of requiring further evidence, he adjourned the case. He had evidently been much impressed by the bearing of the apostle, and was desirous of further information. A few days afterwards, in company with his wife Drusilla, a sister of Agrippa and a woman of an abandoned character, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. The apostle, undaunted by the fear of man, in the spirit of the Baptist attacked the vices and crimes of Felix, and so powerfully wrought upon his conscience that the haughty governor trembled on his tribunal. The avarice of Felix, however, got the better of his fears: he often sent for Paul, but it was to extort a bribe for his liberation.

74. PAUL'S IMPRISONMENT AT CÆSAREA (Acts xxiv. 27).—For two full years Paul remained a prisoner at Cæsarea; and thus for two years he continued cut off from active usefulness, and apparently lost to the church and the world. His imprisonment was not severe; none of his friends were prevented from coming and ministering to him. But we know not how he was engaged; no record has come down to us; no epistles written by him during this period have survived. Those two years are a complete blank in the life of the apostle. But we are not to

suppose that the time spent in confinement was without its value. After the turmoil and excitement of his busy life, Paul required repose. Leisure for quiet reflection was given him ; and thus he was prepared for greater and more fruitful labours, for preaching the Gospel at Rome. By deeper experience of the internal power of the Gospel, and by a more personal communion with the Saviour, he was also the better qualified to write those spiritual Epistles which he afterwards composed. And we may well believe that he received new revelations of divine truth, and thus made further discoveries in the mysteries of the Gospel.

75. PAUL BEFORE FESTUS (Acts xxv. 1-12). After a lapse of two years, Antonius Felix was dismissed from his procuratorship, and succeeded by Porcius Festus. This governor was very different from his predecessor, and ruled over Judea with justice and energy. Had he lived, the Jewish war might have been prevented, or at least deferred ; but, unhappily for the country which he governed, he died two years after his accession to office. Immediately after his arrival at Cæsarea, he repaired to Jerusalem. The high priest, now Ismael the son of Phabi, and the rulers of the Jews, endeavoured to enlist Festus against Paul. They requested that Paul should be brought up to Jerusalem, designing to murder him on the way. Festus refused the request, but desired that the most influential among them should accompany him to Cæsarea, and promised to examine into the matter. In the trial before Festus the same accusations were brought against Paul as those urged by Tertullus, and the same denial of those accusations was made by the apostle. He was guilty, he urged, neither of heresy against the law of the Jews, nor of sacrilege against the temple, nor of treason against Cæsar. Festus, wishing to ingratiate himself with the Jewish rulers, asked Paul whether he would go up to Jerusalem, and there be

judged by the Jews in his presence. But Paul, perhaps fearing that he might be assassinated on the way, or that Festus, like Pontius Pilate, might yield to the solicitations of the Jews, exercised the right of a Roman citizen by appealing to Cæsar. And Festus having consulted with his council, admitted the appeal. He accordingly pronounced the decision of the court: "Thou hast appealed unto Cæsar; unto Cæsar shalt thou go."

76. PAUL'S SPEECH BEFORE AGRIPPA (Acts xxv. 13—xxvi. 32). A few days after this a circumstance occurred which gave Paul the opportunity of pleading the cause of Christ before kings and great ones of the earth. Herod Agrippa II., the son of that Herod whose terrible death is recorded in the book of Acts, did not succeed to the kingdom of his father, but received from the Roman Emperor Claudius the principality of Chalcis with the title of king. He had also the oversight of the temple, with the power of appointing to the high priesthood. Being a dependant prince, he felt it to be his interest to cultivate the favour of the Roman governor; and accordingly, in company with his sister, the notorious Bernice, he came to Cæsarea to congratulate Festus on his accession to office. Festus, in the course of conversation, declared Paul's cause unto the king. Agrippa, as a Jew, was naturally interested in the case, and could not have been ignorant of the Christian religion. He might even have heard of Paul, as one of the great leaders of this new religious movement. He accordingly expressed a wish to hear the apostle. On the morrow a great audience was assembled, composed of Agrippa, Bernice, Festus, and all the dignitaries of Cæsarea. At the special request of Agrippa, Paul was brought forth. He did not on this occasion appear as a prisoner at the bar, but was merely called upon to give a statement of his peculiar religious notions, and of the points of dispute between him and the Jews. He commences

his speech by congratulating himself in having Agrippa as a hearer, who, being a Jew, could understand the nature of the case. He then informs him that in reality the accusation against him referred to the Messianic hope which was shared by the whole nation, inasmuch as he held that that hope was fulfilled in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. He then relates the circumstances of his conversion, and the chief points of dispute between him and his Jewish opponents. As, in the course of his speech, he comes to mention the resurrection of Christ, Festus, struck with amazement at the strangeness of such an idea, interrupts him with the exclamation, "Thou art mad, Paul ; much learning makes thee mad." By his courteous answer, Paul makes it plain that he is neither mad nor an enthusiast. He appeals for confirmation of what he has said to Agrippa himself, and brings home the truth to his conscience in these words : " King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets ? I know that thou believest." The king was evidently impressed, but he had not the courage to avow his convictions before Festus and the great men of Cæsarea. He replied, therefore, half in earnest and half in jest, " In a little thou persuadest me to be a Christian."

77. VOYAGE AND SHIPWRECK (Acts xxvii. 1-44). The appeal to Cæsar being admitted, it was accordingly resolved that Paul should be sent to Rome. It was towards the close of the summer of A.D. 60 that this memorable voyage commenced. Paul and certain prisoners were delivered over to the charge of Julius, a centurion belonging to the body-guard of the governor,^a a man of a humane disposition, and who treated Paul with courtesy and mildness. Nor was Paul alone, for his friends, Luke and Aristarchus, were permitted to accompany him.^b They first touched at Sidon, then sailed over the sea of Cilicia

^a Such we infer is the meaning of Augustus' band.

^b Acts xxvii. 2.

and Pamphylia, and came to Myra,^a an important city of Lycia. Here they were transferred on board an Alexandrian ship bound for Italy. Being detained by contrary winds, it was not until the middle of autumn that they reached Crete, and landed at the Fair Havens to the south of the island. It was now too late to proceed to Italy, being about the beginning of October. It was debated, therefore, whether they should remain at the Fair Havens, or sail to a more commodious port, a short distance off, called Phenice. Against the advice of the apostle, it was resolved to aim for Phenice. A dreadful storm arose, which drove them off the coast of Crete into the open sea. Our space will not permit us to enter into the particulars of the storm, and the measures for preservation taken by the sailors, all which are so graphically described in the Acts. It is enough to say, that after having been tossed about for fourteen days, they were shipwrecked off the coast of Malta at a spot now called St Paul's Bay, situated at the north-eastern extremity of the island.

78. PAUL AT MALTA (Acts xxviii. 1-10). The inhabitants of Malta received Paul and his shipwrecked companions with the greatest kindness. During the three winter months which yet remained they were forced to stay on the island. Paul, though a prisoner, would no doubt employ the interval in preaching the Gospel. He had gained the favour, not only of Julius the Roman centurion, but also of Publius the Roman governor of Malta, having miraculously cured his father of a fever. God also enabled him to perform various other cures among the inhabitants of the island, so that on his departure they, out of gratitude, supplied both his own wants and those of his friends.

79. PAUL'S JOURNEY TO ROME (Acts xxviii. 11-16). On the approach of spring the voyage was

^a Myra was about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles distant from the sea; its port was called Andriace.

proceeded with ; and about February, A.D. 61, Paul and his companions sailed from Malta. With a favourable wind in a few days they reached Puteoli, now Pozzuoli, the port of the Alexandrian vessels. Here, by the kind permission of Julius, Paul was permitted to refresh himself for seven days, and to enjoy the society of those Christian friends who were in the town. From Puteoli they proceeded by land along the Appian way. The Roman Christians, hearing of his approach, went to meet him, travelling, some of them, a distance of forty miles, as far as the small town of Appii Forum, and others a distance of thirty miles, to another town called Tres Tabernæ, or *the Three Taverns*. Thus, cheered and encouraged, though an ambassador in bonds, Paul entered Rome in March 61, in the seventh year of the reign of Nero. Little did the world think what important events were to arise from the entrance of this Jewish captive into the capital of the Cæsars. The centurion delivered Paul and the other prisoners to the pretorian prefect, at that time the illustrious Afranius Burrus.^a Paul, no doubt from the influence exerted by Julius, and probably also from the favourable report sent by Festus and Agrippa, received every indulgence that a prisoner could receive. He was suffered to dwell under military custody in his own hired house near the Roman barracks on the Palatine hill, having full liberty of intercourse with all who came unto him.

80. PAUL'S INTERVIEW WITH THE JEWS (Acts xviii. 17-29). The first days of Paul's sojourn would be spent with the Christians at Rome. But, in preaching the Gospel, he directed his first attention to the Jews. The Jews were very numerous at Rome, amounting to many thousands ; they were quartered in a particular part of the city on the banks of the Tiber, and had several synagogues.

^a Burrus died early in the year 62.

Although they had been banished by Claudius, the edict had soon been reversed, and the Jews again flocked to the imperial city. Paul, having called the chief of them to his lodgings, explained to them the cause of his imprisonment, and then, as on former occasions, reasoned with them, proving from their Scriptures that Jesus was the Messiah. The result was that some were convinced. The majority, however, remained unbelieving. And Paul, grieved and disappointed, dismissed them with a solemn warning, telling them that the salvation which they rejected was sent to the Gentiles.

81. PAUL'S FIRST ROMAN IMPRISONMENT (Acts xxviii. 30, 31). Paul's trial was delayed for two years, and during this period he continued a prisoner at Rome. The narrative of the Acts closes with these words: "Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no man forbidding him." This account, is, however, supplemented by the information given in the Epistles. Paul's imprisonment was comparatively light. It is true he was under military restraint; but, on the other hand, he was under the protection of the Roman government, and met with no molestation either from the unbelieving Jews, or from the ignorant multitude. His chief employment was preaching the Gospel; his house was open to all who came to him; and we learn from the Epistles that his preaching was eminently successful. The Roman soldiers who successively guarded him came under the influence of the Gospel, and many became converts to Christianity. The apostle's bonds in Christ were manifest throughout the whole pretorium, that is to say, the barracks around the palace; and among the salutations sent to the Philippian church are those from Cæsar's household.^a Paul

^a Phil, i. 12-14; iv. 22.

also had numerous companions and fellow-workers with him at Rome, who assisted him in preaching the Gospel in the city, or were sent on missions to the different churches. Timothy is united with him in his salutation to the Philippians; Tychicus was sent by him to Ephesus and Colosse; Epaphroditus brought the contributions of the Philippian church, and Epaphras information from the churches in the Lycus valley; Luke accompanied him to Rome; Mark, restored to favour, was profitable unto him for the ministry; and Demas had not yet forsaken him through the love of this present world.

82. EPISTLES TO THE COLOSSIANS AND EPHESIANS. It was during these two years' imprisonment that Paul wrote four of his Epistles. The Epistles to the Colossians and Ephesians were written at the same time and sent by the same messenger, namely, Tychicus. The church of Colosse had never been personally visited by the apostle, but was probably founded by Epaphras during the apostle's residence at Ephesus. Epaphras had arrived at Rome bringing information concerning the state of that church. False teachers had drawn away the disciples from the faith. The errors inculcated by them were different from those of the Judaistic teachers, and were of a nature which in the next century developed into Gnosticism. The simplicity of the Gospel was corrupted by an admixture of heathen philosophy; the supreme dignity of Christ was denied; the worship of angels was introduced into the church; and principles of an ascetic nature and tendency were practised. To correct and refute these errors was the occasion of this Epistle. For this purpose Paul dwells on the supreme glory of Christ, and warns the Colossians against the mixture of heathen philosophy with the truths of the Gospel. As Tychicus was visiting Proconsular Asia, the apostle embraced the opportunity of sending along with him an Epistle to the church of Ephesus. This

Epistle is commendatory throughout. Paul appears to have had no errors of doctrine to correct, and no faults in practice to reprove.

83. EPISTLE TO PHILEMON. — Along with the Epistles to the Colossians and Ephesians, Paul sent a third Epistle, the Epistle to Philemon, a precious memorial of the private correspondence of the apostle. The occasion of the Epistle is as follows : Onesimus, a slave of Philemon, had for some reason run away from his master, and had fled to Rome, the general resort of all nations. Here he came in contact with Paul, and was converted to Christianity. Thus the apostle calls him “ my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds.” He became eminently serviceable to Paul, and was the object of his warm affection, beloved by him “ both in the flesh and in the Lord.” In the Epistle to the Colossians Paul mentions him as “ a faithful and beloved brother.” Paul wanted to retain him, but he could not do so without the permission of Philemon. He accordingly sent him with this commendatory letter in company with Tychicus to Colosse, in which town Philemon resided. The Epistle to Philemon has gained the admiration of all who have studied it, for its courtesy, its tact, its delicate touches, its affectionate spirit. Its effect cannot be doubted : Onesimus would be received not as a slave, but as a brother beloved in the Lord.

84. EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS. The Epistle to the Philippians was written at the close of Paul’s two years imprisonment. It is the expression of the apostle’s love to his favourite church and of his gratitude for their repeated acts of kindness. The Philippians had repeatedly sent contributions to the apostle ; twice when he was at Thessalonica, once when he was at Corinth, and now they transmitted to Rome a fourth proof of their affection by their messenger Epaphroditus. “ I have all,” writes the apostle, “ and abound ; I am full, having received

of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God." Epaphroditus had been attacked at Rome with a dangerous illness, but now being partially recovered he was on his way back to Philippi, as the bearer of the Epistle. It would also appear from the Epistle that the apostle expected a crisis to occur in his case; the long delayed trial was about to take place; and though the result might be somewhat doubtful, yet he expected a favourable issue. Hence he expresses his hope that he himself would come shortly to them; but that in case he were prevented, he would send Timothy. The apostle takes occasion to warn the Philippians against the Judaistic teachers who, even at Rome, were attempting to counteract his efforts; and he exhorts them to continue in the cultivation of Christian graces and in the imitation of the humility of Jesus Christ.

QUESTIONS AND POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

1. *What was the nature of the vow of the Nazarites?*
 2. *Enumerate Paul's visits to Jerusalem.*
 3. *Why was such a large force sent to conduct Paul to Cæsarea?*
 4. *Give an account of Felix and Festus.*
 5. *Give an account of Herod Agrippa II. and his sister.*
 6. *Give a description of Paul's voyage from Crete to Malta.*
 7. *State how Paul was engaged during his Roman imprisonment.*
 8. *Mention the occasion of the Epistle to Philemon.*
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CHAPTER VII.

CLOSE OF PAUL'S LIFE.

85. PAUL'S SUBSEQUENT HISTORY. The history of Paul, as recorded in the Acts, concludes with these words : " And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house." There the curtain falls, the light is extinguished, and we are left in darkness. Various reasons have been assigned for this abrupt conclusion. Some suppose that Luke intended to write a continuation of his history ; others that he carried down the narrative to the time at which he wrote ; others that he did not mention the fate of Paul, because it was well known to his readers. But the probable reason is that he had accomplished the purpose which he had in view in the composition of his work, which was to give, not a biography of Paul, but a history of the diffusion of Christianity from its commencement at Jerusalem to its reception at Rome. The subsequent history of Paul is left in extreme uncertainty. The historical statements in his last Epistles are few. They are also difficult to arrange and connect together, while the traditions of the early church are by no means trustworthy. The closing words of Luke would certainly lead us to infer that some remarkable change took place in Paul's condition at the end of the two years of his imprisonment, and that this change was not his martyrdom but his release. For if it had been the former, it is hardly possible to suppose that Luke would have failed to make some reference to it.

86. PAUL'S RELEASE FROM IMPRISONMENT. Accordingly, it is the unanimous testimony of ecclesiastical tradition, that Paul, at the close of two years, was released from imprisonment, and went forth again to preach the Gospel. Clement of Rome, a very early writer, identified indeed by many with the Clement who is mentioned in the

Epistle to the Philippians,^a states, in his letter to the Corinthian church, that Paul came to the extremity of the west. Still more definitely is it related by Eusebius, one of the early church historians, how "Paul, after pleading his cause, is said to have gone forth, and after a second visit to the city (Rome) he finished his life with martyrdom." Even in the Epistles which Paul wrote during his first Roman imprisonment, he expresses his expectation of being restored to liberty, and being able to revisit his converts.^b But the great argument in proof of Paul's release is derived from the Pastoral Epistles. There are in them statements of journeys and incidents of travel which do not correspond with any of the missionary journeys recorded in the Acts, and which can only be accounted for by the supposition that Paul was released from his Roman imprisonment, and was again occupied in preaching the Gospel in the provinces of Macedonia, Achaia, and Proconsular Asia. Thus, in the First Epistle to Timothy, Paul says that he left Timothy at Ephesus when he went into Macedonia^c; which does not accord with the visit to Ephesus which is recorded in the Acts; for at that time Timothy preceded him on his journey to Macedonia.^d In the Second Epistle to Timothy he speaks of having left Trophimus at Miletum sick^e; whereas, according to the Acts, Trophimus accompanied the apostle to Jerusalem.^f And in the Epistle to Titus mention is made of a visit to Crete, where Paul left Titus to carry on the work which he had begun^g; which visit, again, cannot correspond with his short sojourn, when, as a prisoner to Rome, he touched on the island.

87. PAUL'S TRIAL AND ACQUITTAL. We are then to suppose that Paul, after a tedious delay of two years (A.D. 61-63), was at length brought to trial. These delays in Roman trials were, we know, by no

^a Phil. iv. 3

^b Phil. ii. 24; Philem. 22.

^c 1 Tim. i. 3.

^d Acts xix. 22.

^e 2 Tim. iv. 20.

^f Acts xxi. 29.

^g Tit. i. 5.

means unusual. In the case of Paul, the loss of time may be accounted for by the necessity of bringing witnesses from a distance, and of reproducing documents which were lost in the shipwreck. The crimes laid to the apostle's charge would be similar to the accusations which the Jews brought against him before the procurators Felix and Festus—treason against Cæsar, the disturbance of the Jews in their religion, and connection with a dangerous sect. Another hired orator like Tertullus would accuse him, and permission would be given to Paul, as a Roman citizen, to make his defence. The result was, that the charges were found not proven, or at least, so far as proven, not criminal; and Paul was set at liberty. The Christians were not as yet regarded as a sect hostile to the Roman government; and although Nero had already given ample evidence of his monstrous iniquity, his rage was not as yet directed against the disciples of Christ. Paul was released from imprisonment in the spring of A.D. 63, whereas the great Neronian persecution, so graphically described by the historian Tacitus, did not occur until July A.D. 64.

88. SUPPOSED JOURNEYS BETWEEN PAUL'S FIRST AND SECOND IMPRISONMENTS. The greatest uncertainty rests on Paul's missionary journeys in the interval between his first and second Roman imprisonments. We are here in the region of conjecture; and accordingly the routes given by different writers are extremely various. In the Epistle to the Romans the apostle mentions it as his intention that, after having visited Rome, he would take his journey into Spain.^a It is not probable, however, that this intention was carried into execution. There are no memorials of his missionary labours in Spain; and the interval between his imprisonments was too short to admit of a journey to that distant country, especially

^a Rom. xv. 21.

when we take into account the visit which he must have made to the East. In all probability he would journey along the usual route to the East, crossing the Adriatic from Brundisium to Dyrrachium, and then by the Egnatian road to Macedonia, and thus fulfil his promise of visiting Philippi.^a From Philippi he would cross over to Troas, where he tells us he left his cloak, books, and parchments with one Carpus,^b and proceed to Ephesus; for to such a visit he alludes, when in one of his Epistles to Timothy he says, "As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus when I went into Macedonia."^c When here he would perhaps visit the neighbouring city of Colosse, according to his promise made to Philemon.^d From Colosse he might proceed to Miletum, where he left Trophimus sick;^e and from Miletum cross over to the island of Crete, where he left Titus to set in order the things that were wanting.^f In his Epistle to Titus he mentions his intention of wintering in Nicopolis in Epirus;^g so that he would go to Corinth, and from that proceed to Nicopolis. All this is, however, extremely conjectural. Paul had evidently several companions on this, his last missionary journey. Mention is made of Timothy, Titus, Artemas, Apollos, Tychicus, Erastus, and Crescens. The time occupied in this journey is extremely uncertain. Some extend it to five or even six years. Others, with greater probability, limit it to a year and a half; for it is hardly to be supposed that after the outbreak of the Neronian persecution such a distinguished leader of the Christians would be left at liberty.

89. THE FIRST EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY AND THE EPISTLE TO TITUS. It was in the course of these journeys between Paul's first and second imprisonments, that he wrote these Epistles. The design of both these Epistles was similar, namely, to instruct Timothy and Titus to oppose false teachers

^a Phil. ii. 24.
^e 2 Tim. iv. 20.

^b 2 Tim. iv. 13.

^c 1 Tim. i. 3.
^f Tit. i. 5.

^d Philem. 22.
^g Tit. iii. 12.

who were subverting the doctrines of the Gospel, and to impart to them directions concerning church government. The errors of these false teachers were similar to those combated in the Epistle to the Colossians; and which in a more developed form, known as Gnosticism, afterwards disturbed the peace of the church. In the principles of church government laid down in these Epistles there is no distinction made between bishops and presbyters; a distinction which did not occur until after the apostolic age.

90. PAUL'S SECOND ROMAN IMPRISONMENT. In his Epistle to Titus, Paul mentions his intention to winter at Nicopolis, or the City of Victory.^a The most celebrated city of this name was Nicopolis in Epirus, which was founded by Augustus in memory of his victory over Antony at Actium. Whether Paul reached this city is of course a matter of uncertainty; but the probability is that he did, as Titus appears to have joined him, and was afterwards sent on a mission to the neighbouring country of Dalmatia.^b It might have been in this Roman colonial city that Paul was arrested. The Neronian persecution was now at its height, and Christianity was regarded no longer as a licensed religion, or an offshoot of Judaism, but as a crime against Roman law. Paul, as a Roman citizen, would again exercise his right of appeal to Cæsar, and would consequently be sent as a prisoner to Rome, perhaps late in the autumn of A.D. 64. Thus Paul was a second time a prisoner at Rome. But his second imprisonment was far severer than his first. He was no longer allowed to dwell in his own hired house with a soldier who kept him. He was cast into some dungeon, and treated as "an evil doer even unto bonds."^c Circumstances had entirely changed. The upright Burrus was no longer the commander of the Pretorian

^a Titus iii. 12.

^b 2 Tim. iv. 10.

^c 2 Tim. ii. 9. According to tradition Paul was cast into the dungeon of the Mamertine prison.

guard, but Tigellinus, infamous for his wickedness and cruelty. There were no longer favourable reports from Festus and Agrippa ; nor was there a centurion Julius to use his influence in the apostle's favour. Nero was no longer restrained by the wisdom of Seneca, but had become that monster of iniquity who is held up to the execration of all succeeding ages. And Christianity was no longer tolerated as a lawful religion, but its adherents were proscribed and persecuted. So far from Paul being permitted to receive all who came to him, it was now dangerous to visit him. Many of his fellow-workers, like Demas, actuated by the fear of man, forsook him,^a and the Asiatics in a body deserted him^b. Others had been sent on missions to distant quarters : Erastus, to Corinth, Crescens to Galatia, Tychicus to Crete, Titus to Dalmatia, and Timothy to Ephesus. Only Luke, the faithful historian of his life, adhered to him to the last.^c Doubtless also Eubulus, Pudens, Linus, and Claudia, from whom he sent salutations to Timothy,^d would minister to his necessities. And he was cheered by the sympathy and aid of Onesiphorus, one of his Asiatic converts, who with much difficulty, and at the peril of his life, visited him in his imprisonment.^e

91. PAUL'S FIRST TRIAL. The trial of Paul was not long delayed. There was at this time no reason for deferring it. Neither witnesses nor documents were necessary. He was charged with being a Christian, and this was a fact too palpable to be denied. He appears to have undergone two trials, the first being preliminary. He was in all probability brought before Nero himself, for he speaks of being delivered from the mouth of the lion,^f a phrase which receives its full meaning by applying it to the emperor. Thus Paul, the apostle of holiness, and Nero, the incarnation of wickedness,—Paul, the

^a 2 Tim. iv. 10.
^c 2 Tim. iv. 10, 11.
^e 2 Tim. i. 16, 17.

^b 2 Tim. i. 15.
^d 2 Tim. iv. 21.
^f 2 Tim. iv. 17

preacher of Christ, and Nero, the embodiment of anti-christ, stood face to face. Was there, even to Nero at the height of his wickedness, an opportunity given for repentance? Did Paul reach the conscience of one so stained with crimes? We know not. We can hardly think it probable; for Nero's conscience must long before this have been completely seared. Paul was alone, deserted by all his friends. but he was not deserted by his Master. The Lord stood with him and strengthened him.^a Paul was remanded to prison, but without the least expectation of final acquittal; rather with the sure prospect of condemnation and death.^b

92. THE SECOND EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY.

It was at this period, after his first trial, that Paul wrote his Second Epistle to Timothy. His life was in imminent danger, and he felt himself deserted and alone; he foresaw that his course was well-nigh run, and that he was about to suffer martyrdom. His deliverance out of the mouth of the lion he felt was only a short respite. He was anxious before he suffered to see Timothy, his beloved son in the faith, and accordingly he wrote urging him to come with all haste to Rome, and to bring with him Mark to supply the place of those who had deserted him.^c As, however, his fate was uncertain, and Timothy might arrive too late, he wrote this Epistle with a view to stir up and encourage him in his ministry. He was to endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ; resolutely to oppose all pernicious errors; and by sound doctrine and wholesome discipline to oppose and refute gainsayers.

93. PAUL'S SECOND TRIAL AND HIS MARTYRDOM. In all probability Paul and Timothy never met again. Timothy might arrive at Rome; but Paul was beyond the reach of his sympathy and assistance; he was already in the world of the spirits of just men made perfect. Paul's second trial was not long after

^a 2 Tim. iv. 16-18.

^b 2 Tim. iv. 6-8.

^c 2 Tim. iv. 9, 11.

his first. Whether he again appeared before Nero, or whether Nero had by this time, as many suppose, departed for Greece and left the government of the city to his freedman Helius, is a matter of conjecture. Paul would again appear alone, with no advocate to plead his cause. His Jewish adversaries would surround the tribunal with grievous complaints against him. The trial terminated in the apostle's condemnation ; by being a Christian he was found guilty of treason against Cæsar ; and as a Roman citizen he was sentenced to decapitation. He had finished his course, and was now ready to be offered as a sacrifice to that faith which he had so zealously preached. In imagination we may follow Paul to the place of execution ; but history entirely fails us. There are numerous ecclesiastical traditions, but they are so mixed with what is undoubtedly fabulous, that they cease to be trustworthy. The unanimous account, however, is that Paul suffered martyrdom by being beheaded outside the city on the road to Ostia, at a place called *Aquæ Salvix*, now known as the Three Fountains.^a The date of his martyrdom, according to tradition, is 29th June A.D. 66 ; but for this there is not the slightest foundation. In all probability it was in the beginning of the winter A.D. 64, for it was "before winter" that Paul desired Timothy to come to him. Thus died the most illustrious of Christian missionaries, the prince of the apostles, the noblest of the noble army of the martyrs. Although he perished by the executioner's axe, yet this conferred on him the martyr's crown ; and he passed from the trials and sorrows of earth, to the glories and blessedness of heaven. He had obtained the object of his desire, "to depart and to be with Christ." To such a conclusion to his life he had himself looked forward as a matter of congratulation and joy. "Yea,

^a Near to this spot is the Protestant cemetery.

and if I be poured out as a libation upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all. For the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me."^a

94. PAUL'S CHARACTER. Of all men Paul most nearly approached the perfect man in Christ Jesus. The most prominent feature in his character was entire devotion to Christ; to Him he surrendered himself and all that he possessed. He seemed to have had no will of his own, but to have subordinated it wholly to the will of Christ; to live to Christ^b was the grand ruling principle of his conduct. We perceive in him a spirit of sincerity, a perfect freedom from all pretence and hypocrisy, the strongest determination of mind, the resolution to go forward on the path of duty in spite of all difficulties; and at the same time an elevation above all fanaticism, and above the inclination to court danger unnecessarily. His zeal was kept in subjection to his reason and was ever tempered with prudence. Although he was uncompromising when duty or truth was concerned, and at times almost passionate in his attacks upon his opponents, yet he was characterised by an almost womanly tenderness. He was gentle toward the erring; he wept over the moral defections of his converts; he had imbibed the spirit of Him who, whilst He denounced the Pharisees, wept over Jerusalem. Notwithstanding his great attainments and achievements, he was marked by a humility which caused him to reckon himself less than the least of all saints, and to deplore his shortcomings and imperfections. Nor must we omit the courtesy which on all occasions he displayed, and which appears so remarkably in his frank apology to the high priest Ananias, in his dignified reply to the rude interruption of Festus, in his polite address to Agrippa, and in his Epistle to Philemon. The only fault which we can discern in his character is per-

^a Phil. ii. 17, 18

^b Phil. i. 21.

haps an occasional warmth of temper carried to excess—a failing certainly on the side of virtue, due to the earnestness of his disposition. Thus his passionate address to the high priest Ananias was perhaps not altogether to be justified, and the contention between him and Barnabas concerning the reception of Mark into the mission was perhaps not free from blame on either side.

95. **PAUL'S WORK.** Whilst the life of Paul was most helpful to the cause of Christianity, the writings which he has left have been still more so. The influence of Paul in moulding especially Protestant theology is greater than that of the other apostles; and thus he is not merely the greatest missionary, but the greatest teacher of Christianity. He is pre-eminently the apostle of the Gentiles, the great teacher of the doctrine of justification by faith without the works of the law. Paul, being dead, yet speaks more powerfully and more effectually than when he was charged at Thessalonica with turning the world upside down, or when he preached the unknown God in the Areopagus of Athens, or caused the worshippers of the Ephesian Diana to fear for their gains, or made the licentious and haughty Felix tremble on his tribunal.

96. **CHRONOLOGY OF PAUL'S LIFE.** The chronology of Paul's life may be fixed with considerable exactness. There are three dates of events connected with secular history, which may be reckoned upon with almost perfect certainty. The death of Herod Agrippa I. occurred A.D. 44; the accession of Festus to the procuratorship, A.D. 60; and the Neronian persecution, A.D. 64. Now a chronology of Paul's life, as that life is recorded in the Acts and supplemented by the Epistles, may, with considerable probability, be traced backwards from the accession of Festus to the period of the apostle's conversion, and forwards to the Neronian persecution. We annex the following chronological table of Paul's life:—

BIOGRAPHY OF PAUL.	EMPERORS.
A.D. 3? Birth of Paul?	Tiberius.
,, 18? Paul's education at Jerusalem,	,,
,, 36. Paul's presence at the martyrdom of Stephen,	,,
,, 37. Conversion of Paul,	Caligula.
,, 37-40. Paul's retirement to Arabia,	,,
,, 40. First visit to Jerusalem (Gal. i. 18),	,,
,, 40-42. Paul's retirement to Tarsus,	Claudius.
,, 42-44. Paul at Antioch,	,,
,, 45-48. Paul's first missionary journey,	,,
,, 48-51. Paul at Antioch,	,,
,, 51. Paul at the council of Jerusalem (Gal. ii. 1),	,,
,, 52-54. Paul's second missionary journey,	,,
,, 54-58. Paul's third missionary journey,	Nero.
,, 58-60. Paul's imprisonment at Cæsarea and voyage to Rome,	,,
,, 61-63. Paul's first Roman imprisonment,	,,
,, 63, 64? Interval between Paul's first and second imprisonment,	,,
,, 64? Paul's martyrdom,	,,

97. PAUL'S EPISTLES. Thirteen Epistles in the New Testament are expressly ascribed to Paul. We cannot suppose, however, that these are all the epistles which the apostle wrote; but only those which have been preserved by God in His providence for the instruction of His Church. He to whom was committed the care of all the churches must have written many epistles, though, of course, letter-writing was much rarer in the days of the apostle than in our time. In Scripture, too, there are traces of lost epistles of Paul.^a A fourteenth epistle is ascribed to him, namely, that to the Hebrews; but its authorship is doubtful. The thirteen acknowledged Epistles of Paul are addressed, either to a circle of churches, as is the case with the Epistle to the Galatians, and, accord

^a 1 Cor. v. 9; Col. iv. 16.

ing to some, the Epistle to the Ephesians ; or to a particular church, as is the case with the Epistle to the Philippians ; or to individuals, as is the case with the Epistles to Philemon, Timothy, and Titus. They admit of a threefold division :—1. “The earlier Epistles,” written before the first Roman imprisonment. Of these there are six, namely, the Epistle to the Romans, the two Epistles to the Corinthians, the Epistle to the Galatians, and the two Epistles to the Thessalonians. 2. “The Epistles of the captivity,” written during the first Roman imprisonment. Of these there are four, namely, the Epistles to the Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon. 3. “The Pastoral Epistles,” written after the first Roman imprisonment. Of these there are three, namely, the two Epistles to Timothy and the Epistle to Titus.

Table showing the dates of the epistles and the places from which they were probably written.

EPISTLES.	PLACES.	A. D.
1 Thessalonians	Corinth	52
2 Thessalonians	Corinth	53
Galatians	Ephesus	55
1 Corinthians	Ephesus	57
2 Corinthians	Philippi	57
Romans	Corinth	58
Colossians	Rome	62
Philemon	Rome	62
Ephesians	Rome	62
Philippians	Rome	63
1 Timothy	Macedonia	64
Titus	Macedonia	64
2 Timothy	Rome	64

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QUESTIONS AND POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

1. *State the argument for Paul's release from imprisonment.*
2. *Mention the journeys alluded to in the Pastoral Epistles.*
3. *Give a description of the Neronian persecution.*
4. *Show the difference between Paul's first and second imprisonments.*
5. *Give instances of Paul's patriotism.*
6. *Prove that fanaticism was not a feature in Paul's character.*

